

The Hindu, 1 August 2005

SIMI hand suspected in train blast

LUCKNOW: Preliminary investigations into the July 28 blast in New Delhi-bound Shramjeevi Express point to the involvement of the proscribed Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) in the crime. The blast in the general compartment of the train near a railway crossing in the Jaunpur district that claimed 10 lives and caused serious injuries to more than 50 passengers was caused by an Ammonium Nitrate based explosive, ADG (GRP) V K Bhalla said here on Sunday. The blast, though, was similar to the one that rocked the Sabaramati Express near Barabanki in 2000 resulting in the loss of 11 lives. The subsequent arrest of militants in J&K had then revealed the involvement of SIMI in the crime... Reliable police sources admitted that despite being banned by the Centre on September 27, 2001, SIMI was still active in at least 21 UP districts, while ISI operatives were also active in more than 30 districts.

The Daily Excelsior, 1 August 2005

Militants to be produced in Faizabad court

LUCKNOW: The four terrorists arrested in Jammu and Kashmir in connection with the July 5 fidayeen attack on the Ram Janmabhoomi complex at Ayodhya are expected to be produced before a Faizabad court on Wednesday. The terrorists had allegedly provided logistic support to the militants, who stormed the disputed site with sophisticated weapons and hand grenades. Two of the arrested terrorists had also transported weapons from the Valley to Panipat, where the arms consignment was handed over to the Ayodhya attackers.

The Daily Excelsior, 1 August 2005

India's internal security in shambles: Advani

MANDU (MP)/dehradun: Alleging that India's internal security system was in shambles, BJP president L K Advani today said that the Centre was responsible for this state of affairs. The seasoned leader expressed concern over the increase in insurgency within Jammu and Kashmir. "The BJP never compromised on national security and even today every party worker is dedicated to that cause. Expressing concern over increasing terrorist activities in Muridke in Pakistan, Mr Advani urged the Centre to take up the issue with Pakistan. It was the BJP, who despite remaining uncompromising on the issue of terrorism, kept the peace dialogue with Pakistan going.

The Hindu, 4 August 2005

Massive security plan mooted for Ayodhya shrines (Press Trust of India)

Lucknow: Drawing up a security plan against "possible terrorist attacks", the Uttar Pradesh government on Wednesday proposed spending an additional Rs 56.32 crore to safeguard the shrines at Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura and the Taj Mahal at Agra. The Crisis Management Group meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Neera Yadav, considered "bullet-proofing the red zone in the acquired land at Ayodhya to safeguard the sanctum sanctorum from grenade and rocket attacks", Principal Secretary (Home) Alok Sinha said here. The security measures based on the standing committee's report would cost an additional Rs 56.32 crore and were aimed at "foiling possible terrorist attacks by suicide squads at any of the four places discussed during today's meeting", Sinha said on Wednesday.

The Hindu, 4 August 2005

Security will be strengthened for offshore platforms: Aiyar

NEW DELHI: The Government will strengthen security for offshore oil platforms to minimise the possibility of attacks by terrorists who could take their cue from the destruction of a Bombay High platform after a ship collided with it last week. The Government will evolve a strategy to deal with the possibility of undersea sabotage of offshore oil assets, Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar assured the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday. He was responding to apprehensions expressed by the former Chief of the Army Staff, Shankar Roy Choudhury, The existing over-the-surface security arrangements for oil rigs were adequate and would be beefed up with additional radars and speedboats, Mr. Aiyar said replying to a short-duration discussion on the accident. Maintaining that it would not be in the national interest to disclose all security measures for oil platforms in the high seas, he said these included constant monitoring by a joint committee comprising senior officials from the Navy, the Coast Guard, the Indian Air Force and the Intelligence Bureau. Similar security committees, headed by the Director-General of Police, were in place in each State for onshore oil assets.

The Hindu, 4 August 2005

ISI network busted in Assam

GUWAHATI: The Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the Assam Police have busted a network of ISI operatives, who were passing on highly classified defence documents to officials of the Pakistan Embassy in Delhi. The network was busted following the arrest of a retired Indian Air Force sergeant Md. Hanif from a city hotel along with three others on July 10. Several highly classified defence documents were recovered. The classified documents

contained information on Army operations, recruitment and deployment.

The Daily Excelsior, 4 August 2005

Weapons transported from Mendhar to Aligarh (By Sanjeev Pargal)

JAMMU: Investigations by Jammu Police in Ayodhya fidayeen attack on July 5 have nearly been completed. Some more important revelations were made by four militants before they were handed over to Uttar Pradesh police last week. Final interrogation of Asif Iqbal alias Farooq, Shakeel Ahmed, Mohd Naseem and Mohd Aziz has revealed that it was Masood Azhar, chief of Jaish-e-Mohammed, who was among four top militants released in lieu of a hijacked Indian Airlines plane, who had masterminded the attack. He closely monitored attack through a satellite telephone from Pakistan till it was executed. "In fact, Farooq had initially misled the police that he had transported weapons from Srinagar to Panipat and that he was part of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) outfit. It was on the basis of his statement that UP police chief disclosed at a press conference on July 15 afternoon that Ayodhya attack was masterminded by the LeT", the sources said. A total of 10 persons, all involved in Ayodhya conspiracy, have so far been arrested by the police.

The Daily Excelsior, 4 August 2005

Militants taken to Faizabad

AYODHYA: Uttar Pradesh police today brought the four terrorists, arrested in Jammu and Kashmir in connection with the July 5 fidayeen attack on Ram Janmabhoomi, to Faizabad. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Avinash Chandra said here, the ultras would be produced before a Faizabad court tomorrow. The terrorists were being kept under tight security. The terrorists had allegedly provided logistic support to the militants, who stormed the disputed site with sophisticated weapons and hand grenades. Two of the arrested terrorists had also transported weapons from the Valley to Panipat, where the arms consignment was handed over to the Ayodhya attackers.

The Hindu, 5 August 2005

Ayodhya: judicial custody for militants (Press Trust of India)

FAIZABAD: The four militants, arrested in Jammu and Kashmir for their involvement in the attack on the Ram Janambhoomi Complex in Ayodhya, were remanded to 14-day judicial custody by a local court on Thursday. A huge crowd, which had gathered in the court premises, raised slogans against the militants when the police brought them in a special vehicle. They have been slapped with charges pertaining to anti-national activities, riot and possession of illegal arms and criminal conspiracy leading to murder, under various sections of the Indian Penal Code.

The Indian Express, 5 August 2005

Jaish man gets death, Geelani freed (Press Trust of India)

New Delhi: In the Parliament attack case, the Supreme Court on Thursday upheld the death penalty for Jaish-e-Mohammad militant Mohd Afzal and also upheld the acquittals of S A R Geelani and Afsan Guru, wife of another accused Shaukat Hussain Guru. Shaukat who was awarded the death penalty by the Delhi High Court got away light as the apex court awarded only 10 years imprisonment saying he was not part of the criminal conspiracy to attack Parliament on December 13, 2001. On Geelani, the Supreme Court said though there is no direct evidence to link him to the terrorists who attacked the Parliament, there is a spectre of suspicion on him as he seemed to rejoice when the attack was taking place. The apex court termed the attack on Parliament as a gravest crime of enormous severity and said it is a classic case of 'rarest of rare cases'. Pakistani militants had attacked Parliament on December 13, 2001. Nine security personnel were killed and 16 others were injured.

The Daily Excelsior, 5 August 2005

Govt soft on terrorism: BJP

NEW DELHI: The BJP today strongly assailed the UPA Government for its 'soft-peddling' on the issue of terrorism, alleging that it was compromising on national security by trying to appease its vote bank. "During various meetings with Pakistani authorities, the Government has not forcefully taken up the problem of that country inciting terrorism on Indian soil," Prof Vijay Kumar Malhotra said initiating a discussion in the House on "terrorism in the country including attack on Ram Janambhoomi complex at Ayodhya." Describing these and other such acts as the "sins of the Government," Mr Malhotra said it has taken no steps to deport the refugees from Bangladesh. He said in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, terrorists were being dealt with a heavy hand, but the Indian Government had not displayed that firmness. Noting that 80,000 people have died as a result of terrorism, he stressed the needs for more stringent laws. "The ISI continues to fund and train terrorists, but no substantive measures were being taken to curb this," he said, adding that despite 'madrasas' serving a breeding ground for terrorists, no action was taken to curb the 'mushroom' growth of such unregistered institutions.

The Hindu, 8 August 2005

Surveillance on Babbar Khalsa stepped up (By Devesh K. Pandey)

NEW DELHI: The Delhi police have put the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) and two other extremist organisations on their watch-list in the run up to this year's Independence Day celebrations at the historic Red Fort here. The BKI was behind the blasts in two cinema halls in the Capital on May 22 in which one person was killed and several others were injured. The police subsequently arrested about 75 BKI conduits and militants in Delhi and Punjab, including the BKI chief of operations in the country, Jagtar Singh Hawara. However, they have not been able to trace another 25 BKI militants who are suspected to be active in the country and could cause disturbance in the run up to the Independence Day celebrations. Another major concern for the police is that explosives and ammunition sent by Wadhawa Singh, the Pakistan-based BKI chief, have not yet been recovered. Intercepts of conversations of militants -- mostly belonging to the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed -- operating in the Kashmir Valley and Pakistan occupied Kashmir, suggests that plans are being hatched to carry out attacks.

The Hindu, 11 August 2005

Bomb blast: splinter group's role suspected

KARIMNAGAR: The Karimnagar police are suspecting the role of a splinter group of a Hyderabad-based fundamental organisation behind the tiffin box bomb explosion at the busy RTC bus stand complex in the town on Tuesday, injuring 21 persons. Preliminary investigations by the police revealed that two unidentified youths had placed the bomb in an aluminium tiffin box and wrapped up in a plastic bag at the busy platform number 6 and ignited a fuse wire and disappeared within seconds. Though the chemical examination of the splinters is to yet be ascertained by the Forensic Science laboratory, the police suspect that the fundamental group might have used crude explosives of iron bolts, iron pipes mixed with nitro-glycerine-based chemical. The police are also probing into all angles, including the support of the ISI and Lashkar-e-Toiba terrorists, for this splinter fundamental organisation and the reason for choosing Karimnagar town for exploding the bomb.

The Daily Excelsior, 13 August 2005

Training camps still operational: Patil

NEW DELHI: Acknowledging terrorists activities in Jammu and Kashmir had come down in the first seven months of 2005, Home Minister Shivraj Patil today said that a number of "training camps" were still operational in Pakistan. "Pakistan has to ensure that peace prevails," he said, in his reply in the discussion on terrorist activities in the country, including the Ayodhya attack, in the Lok Sabha. The discussion was initiated by BJP MP Vijay Kumar Malhotra on August 4. "Some countries rely upon terrorism to wreak revenge upon their enemies. They have developed theories on terrorism. They think terrorism is a low cost option available to them to unleash proxy war on their neighbours. "They want to give million cuts to enemies. The theory that their religions are superior to those of others gives rise to fundamentalism and terrorism," the Minister said. "The terrorists who attacked Ayodhya had tried to ignite the fire of communal hatred and divide the country. They had no other reason to attack the place," he said. Patil said the Centre has asked State Governments to improve security arrangements at Varanasi, Mathura and Agra along with other places of historical, cultural, religious, political, industrial, scientific units and installations. Complimenting the security forces posted at Ayodhya in foiling the terrorist attack, Mr Patil said all the persons involved in the attempt were shot dead.

The Indian Express, 13 August 2005

'Valley violence dropped by 25 pc this year'

NEW DELHI: Jammu and Kashmir saw a 24.5 per cent dip in violent incidents till July, as compared to the corresponding period last year, Home Minister Shivraj Patil told the Lok Sabha today. He attributed it to the government's policies, and said there has been a 28.5 per cent decrease in civilians killed. He was capping discussions on terrorism and the terrorist attack on Ayodhya. Patil encountered protests from BJP's Vijay Kumar Malhotra for avoiding to name Pakistan for supporting terrorism in India. Patil said: "Some countries use terrorism as a weapon. They think it is a low-cost option to unleash a proxy war on neighbours... The theory that their religions are superior gives rise to fundamentalism and terrorism." Regarding the North-Eastern states, Patil said, "Till July-end, terrorism-related incidents decreased by 5.5 per cent. Civilians killed decreased by 28 per cent, and security forces by 58 per cent, as compared to the corresponding period last year." "Assam has been less peaceful, and Manipur has suffered more," said Patil, adding, "We have taken steps to stop illegal immigration and infiltration. We have fenced more than half of our eastern border with Bangladesh. The remaining would be soon."

The Indian Express, 14 August 2005

Plane can be shot down, no demands will be met (By Pranab Dhal Samanta)

Nearly six years after the Kandahar hijack and four years after 9/11, India has woken up to adopt a bold and

tough hijack policy. Under this, for the first time, the Government can shoot down a commercial aircraft if it is turned into a "missile" by hijackers. The policy also rules out any negotiations with hijackers on their demands. The policy, approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) this week, also makes it clear that there will be no negotiations with hijackers on their demands. Hijackers will be engaged in negotiations only to bring an end to the incident, comfort passengers and prevent loss of life but without conceding to any demand. These new guidelines are dictated by a policy doctrine which states that any attempt to hijack an aircraft will be considered an act of aggression against the country and will, thus, prompt a response fit for an aggressor. The punishment to a hijacker will be death penalty.

The Daily Excelsior, 15 August 2005

Hijacked plane to be shot down (Press Trust of India)

NEW DELHI: Unveiling a tough anti-hijack policy, the Government today said any hijacked plane being used as a missile to target vital installations like the 9/11 terror attack would be shot down. The policy, cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Securities (CCS), ruled out negotiations with hijackers on their demands and said talks would only be aimed at preventing the loss of life or ending the incident. Outlining the measures, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee told PTI if the hijacking took place on the Indian soil, the aircraft would be immobilised and not allowed to take off. On not holding talks with hijackers, he said these would only be aimed at rescuing the aircraft and passengers, and if the plane was hijacked to a third country, negotiations would be conducted with concerned authorities. Mukherjee said if the aircraft was in Indian air space, Air Force fighters would be scrambled to intercept it and force it to land on the Indian soil. On shooting down the aircraft, the Minister said these would be undertaken in extreme circumstances as happened in the 9/11 terror attack. He said the aircraft would be shot if it chose not to identify itself and appeared to have evil intentions of targeting vital installations.

The Hindu, 15 August 2005

Tight security in Delhi

NEW DELHI: : In view of intelligence inputs of a possible terrorist strike, the Delhi police have made elaborate security arrangements in coordination with the paramilitary forces for the Independence Day celebrations in the Capital on Monday. The area surrounding the historic Red Fort, from where Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will unfurl the Tricolour on Monday morning, has been turned into a virtual fortress. While there is heavy police presence around the venue, metal detectors have been placed at the entrance gates to scan visitors to the function. Anti-aircraft guns have been installed at strategic locations. The police have taken the assistance of the Air Force to carry out air surveillance. Quick reaction teams comprising commandos have been deployed at various pockets and snipers posted atop high-rise buildings near the Red Fort. As part of anti-sabotage search operations, the police are combing vital installations, guesthouses and hotels in the Walled City area and other parts of the Capital. Metro Rail stations and busy market places are also being searched. The intelligence agencies had earlier tipped off the police about organisations such as the Babbar Khalsa International, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad trying to cause disturbances during the Independence Day celebrations.

The Hindu, 15 August 2005

Security tightened in West Bengal

KOLKATA: Intelligence reports warning of attempts by Maoist activists to disrupt train services in certain parts of West Bengal on the Independence Day have forced authorities to sound a high alert in the south-western parts of the State, where the extremists are suspected to have a presence. Security agencies have been warned of infiltration of activists of some fundamentalist groups from across the border with Bangladesh who might plan acts of sabotage in the districts and high-density areas in Kolkata. "We have tightened security in some trains and along the tracks in certain districts following reports of possible attacks by certain organisations on railway installations," S Ahmed, Divisional Railway Manager, Kharagpur, told The Hindu on Sunday. "Standard drills have been carried out." A high alert has been sounded in areas where Maoist outfits have been active in recent months.

The Indian Express, 16 August 2005

We will fight terrorism in all its forms: Manmohan (Press Trust of India)

New Delhi: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Monday night condemned the 'mindless' violence in Andhra Pradesh in which nine persons including Congress MLA C. Narsi Reddy were killed by naxalites and said government was committed to fighting terrorism in all its forms. Conveying his condolences and his deep distress on the act to state Chief Minister Y.S. Rajashekhara Reddy, Singh said, "no interests of the people can be served by mindless killings of innocent persons", according to PMO spokesman Sanjaya Baru. Reddy and eight others including his son and a municipal commissioner were gunned down on Monday morning by armed naxalites during an inauguration function of a school building in Narayanpet town, 120 kms from Hyderabad.

The Hindu, 16 August 2005

Naxalites gun down Congress MLA, 8 others (By S.Nagesh Kumar)

HYDERABAD: Andhra Pradesh Congress MLA Chittam Narsi Reddy and eight others were killed by an 'action team' of CPI (Maoist) in Narayanpet town of Mahabubnagar district of the State on Independence Day. The assailants, suspected to be members of the Nallamala 'action team', sprayed bullets with two AK-47 assault rifles as the MLA was about to lay the foundation stone for a road in a Dalitwada. Police sounded a red alert throughout the Telangana region and areas adjoining the Nallamala forest in the wake of the attack, easily the biggest on civilians since the Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy Government decided against extending the ban on naxalites in May 2004. They also rushed a large contingent of armed men and launched combing operations around Narayanpet.

The Hindu, 16 August 2005

Manmohan, Sonia condemn naxalite attack

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Home Minister Shivraj Patil and United Progressive Alliance chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Monday condemned the violence in Andhra Pradesh, in which nine persons, including Congress MLA C. Narsi Reddy, were killed by Naxalites. The Centre was committed to fighting terrorism, they said. Conveying his condolences to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, Dr. Singh said that "no interests of the people can be served by mindless killings of innocent persons." According to official sources, the Prime Minister and the Home Minister have assured the State Government of help from the Centre in fighting the violence unleashed by Naxalites. Later, Home Ministry officials said the Ministry was keeping a close watch on the situation in Andhra Pradesh and would offer all assistance to the State Government.

The Daily Excelsior, 16 August 2005

Dismantle terror infrastructure totally: PM to Pak

NEW DELHI: Extending a fresh invitation to anyone interested in dialogue in Jammu and Kashmir, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today made it clear to Pakistan that the entire infrastructure of terrorism should be "totally dismantled" as "half-hearted" efforts at curbing terrorists cannot succeed. He also told the rebel groups that if violence continued, "then our response to it will be hard". In his second Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort, the Prime Minister said in the context of terrorism and extremism, development and security have an intrinsic relationship. "Extremism is a challenge which requires a united response from all of us. However, it is also necessary to look at a political resolution of this problem," he said. Referring to Jammu and Kashmir, Singh said terrorists have never been friends of people of Kashmir. As long as they continue their terrorist attacks, the armed forces would be alert and would give them a fitting response in which common citizens might also be affected at times, he said.

The Daily Excelsior, 16 August 2005

MLA, 8 others gunned down

NEW DELHI: A Congress MLA and eight others were gunned down by Naxalites in Andhra Pradesh and 12 vehicles set ablaze in Manipur even as militants in Jammu and Kashmir made a vain bid to disrupt celebrations on the 59th Independence Day which passed off peacefully in other parts of the country. Ruling Congress legislator C Narsi Reddy, his son and seven others, including a Municipal Commissioner were killed by four suspected Naxalites who fired at them with AK Assault Rifles during the inauguration of a school building in Narayanpet town, 120 kms from Hyderabad, police said here. In north-east where insurgents had called for boycott of the celebrations, the national event passed off smoothly but for Manipur, where unidentified persons in combat gear set ablaze 12 vehicles, including nine trucks, on Imphal-Guwahati highway. In Srinagar, militants exploded an IED in a park adjacent to Bakshi Stadium an hour and a half before the Chief Minister Mufti Mohd Sayeed was to unfurl the national flag.

The Hindu, 18 August 2005

Four terrorist organisations operating in the country: Patil

NEW DELHI: Admitting that four terrorist organisations, with bases in foreign countries, were operating in the country, Home Minister Shivraj Patil said in the Rajya Sabha during question hour on Wednesday that these organisations were very skilful and did not leave behind evidence after a terrorist strike. "It is very difficult to connect them directly," he said, responding to Yashwant Sinha's (BJP) question on whether the Government had come across "hard evidence" of their involvement with the Inter Services Intelligence of Pakistan. Without naming any country, Mr. Patil said: "We are not blaming anybody but we know the reality. We don't want to mention (names) and stop there." He said the involvement of four organisations - Hizb-e-Islami, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen - was known because people (its members) have been arrested and cases filed. However, despite threat of violence from these organisations and the Babbar Khalsa, India was in a position to provide the "proper atmosphere and security" to several international dignitaries expected to visit the country over the next few months, the Home Minister assured members.

The Indian Express, 18 August 2005

Hijacked foreign planes won't be allowed to land in India (By Pranab Dhal Samanta)

New Delhi: The Government, in its landmark anti-hijack policy cleared by Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) last week, has said that any foreign-registered aircraft hijacked in Indian skies will not be allowed to land in the country. According to the policy, all efforts will be made to ensure that the plane makes a safe and quick exit from Indian airspace. Indian fighters will escort the plane and ensure that 25 nautical miles airspace is cleared around the hijacked aircraft. As reported first by The Sunday Express on August 14, India has adopted a tough hijack policy which specifies-for the first time-that a hijacked aircraft may be shot down. If the aircraft aligns itself to a strategic target like Rashtrapati Bhavan, Parliament House and other important government installations, it will be declared a 'threat' and the CCS can take a decision to shoot it down. However, the decision to declare a "rogue" aircraft as a threat lies with the Air Headquarters-the executive authority in such a situation. The policy, however, makes it clear that the pilot of the fighter aircraft will not take an independent decision, regardless of what the hijacked aircraft may do.

The Assam Tribune, 19 August 2005

India offers help to Bangla to curb terror

NEW DELHI - Conveying its serious concern over the serial blasts in Bangladesh, India today offered to it "any kind of assistance" while asking Dhaka to identify the perpetrators of the terror acts, reports PTI. "A stable, prosperous, secular and democratic Bangladesh is not just in the interests of the people of Bangladesh, but also of India and the region as a whole," External Affairs Ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna told reporters here. "We urged the Government of Bangladesh to identify the perpetrators of these terrorist acts and offered any kind of assistance," he said. Two persons were killed and about 150 injured in the blasts that simultaneously rocked cities and towns of Bangladesh yesterday. The spokesman said leaflets have been found at the site of each of the blasts authored by a fundamentalist outfit, the Jama'atul Mujahedin Bangladesh, that was banned just six months back. Raising the issue during Zero Hour, he said emergence of "fundamentalist terrorism" in Bangladesh was a matter of grave concern for India which shares a long border with it.

The Hindu, 19 August 2005

War on terror: U.S. seeks India's help

KOLKATA: The United States hopes to receive India's co-operation in its war against terrorism around the world. Condemning those behind the recent series of explosions across Bangladesh, U.S. Ambassador David C. Mulford said here on Thursday that "such type of activities was regrettable and unacceptable, irrespective of where they take place - whether in New York city or Bangladesh." "The U.S. is at war with global terrorism. We spend a lot of time and money for this and hope to receive assistance from other countries, including India," he said.

The Daily Excelsior, 19 August 2005

Al-Qaeda presence in Kolkata worries cops (Press Trust of India)

KOLKATA: Already beset with problems of infiltration across Bangladesh and use of Kolkata as 'safe' refuge of ultras, the reported presence of al-Qaeda sympathisers in the city in Kolkata has added to the headache of the police. Detention of two persons for circulating handbills and selling coupons to raise funds in the name of an organisation having al-Qaeda in its name from eastern city's Kusthithia area, has alarmed the police. Even as the police are reluctant to give details about the two detained persons, stated to be of Bangladeshi origin, police vigil in some minority pockets has been intensified, particularly after some al-Qaeda handbills in the name 'Mujahideen Al-Qaeda Pacific International' reached them. According to the city police Chief, inquiry is in progress to ascertain for whom the handbills and coupons are meant as also from where such collection are made. Kolkata has been regarded as a 'safe haven' for the Boros, Nagas, ULFA and Sikh militants besides being a corridor for the movement of Kashmiri militants. According to the police, it has tightened security in the entire city to thwart any move to build up any militant set-up.

The Hindu, 20 August 2005

Pictures of terrorists seized from studio (Press Trust of India)

MUZAFFARNAGAR: Police have seized a film roll containing 36 photographs of suspected terrorists, their hideouts and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir training camps from a studio here. The police have sealed the studio and were interrogating its owner and his associate to ascertain if they had any links with the militants. They disclosed that a woman from Deoband delivered the film, Meerut range Inspector-General of Police V.K. Sharma said. They identified her as Vandana and a hunt was on for her, he said. All the film rolls have been seized and were being examined by intelligence agencies. Some of the photos seized show militants against a hilly backdrop, AK-47 assault rifles in hand and carrying wireless sets while others are suspected to be of terror training camps in PoK.

The Indian Express, 20 August 2005

'Terror' photos emerge from Deoband studio (By Mohit Dubey)

DEOBAND: A girl studying Unani medicine at a private medical college here holds the key to police investigations after the chance discovery of a film roll at a city photo lab. The roll has 18 pictures of people brandishing SLRs and AK-47s along with a small radio handset. Of the 32 pictures developed from the roll, 18 show bearded men in their mid-20s and 30s wearing Pakhtooni costumes, standing in different postures with guns in the backdrop of mountainous terrain dotted with Chinar trees. Investigators said they are in the process of getting a sketch of the girl, 19, from descriptions provided by Neetu Tyagi, owner of the Geetanjali photo studio, where the roll was dropped for developing on Tuesday. The girl was supposed to pick up the photos yesterday, but did not turn up, probably out of fear that she had goofed up with the pictures. Police are also planning to visit the Darul Uloom's hostels-the Darul Iqamah-as part of their efforts to zero in on the suspect.

The Assam Tribune, 20 August 2005

India worried over Bangla developments

KOLKATA - Terming the large-scale terrorist violence in Bangladesh as "worrisome", Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee today said the development in the neighbouring country has its impact in India, reports PTI. "Developments in Bangladesh are worrisome and the rise in terrorist activities in a neighbouring country has its impact on India too," Mukherjee told reporters here. He said "even though we are deeply concerned at the developments, we cannot do much about it as we cannot interfere in the affairs of a sovereign state." "We have expressed our concern to the Government of Bangladesh and we do hope Bangladesh government will be in a position to keep the situation under control," Mukherjee said.

The Hindu, 21 August 2005

Army clears mystery of controversial photos

NEW DELHI: The Army on Saturday ended the controversy generated over photographs of "terrorists" seized from Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh by saying the men were actually Village Defence Committee (VDC) members from Jammu and Kashmir who had voluntarily taken up arms to defend their homes. On the basis of photographs released to the media by the U.P. police, it was alleged that "terrorists from J&K" had visited western U.P., which had become a "hotbed" of terrorist activity. Another section of the media had suggested that the photos showed the "terrorists" might have been in touch with a famous Islamic seminary in the vicinity. The Army official said the men in the photographs were from Surankote in Jammu & Kashmir, a hotbed of terrorist activity and major infiltration route till the Army launched 'Operation Sarpvishay' in January 2003 leading to the busting of over 100 terrorist hideouts.

The Hindustan Times, 21 August 2005

JeM and not LeT behind Ayodhya attack (Press Trust of India)

It was Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and not Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) behind the July 5 attack on the Ram Janambhoomi Temple Complex in Ayodhya as was suspected earlier, informed sources said. During a detailed interrogation by central security agencies of the five persons arrested, it was found that that it was JeM and not LeT behind the failed attack on the makeshift temple, the sources said. Though UP and Jammu & Kashmir police were trying hard to piece together their stories of Lashkar being involved in the attack, several leads clearly indicated involvement of JeM in the attack which includes evidences gathered by central agencies that Mohammed Kari, the absconding mastermind, was the local commander of JeM and not Lashkar. During investigation, it was found that one of the five terrorists killed during the attack on July 5 had visited Deoband and had stayed there. The sources quoted the arrested terrorists saying that it was one of the unfulfilled dreams of Azhar to attack sanctum sanctorum of the Ram Temple at Ayodhya and one of the important tasks of JeM formed after breaking away from Harkat -ul-Mujahideen (HuM).

The Indian Express, 21 August 2005

Live grenade found in Ayodhya (Press Trust of India)

Ayodhya: A live hand grenade was found near the makeshift Ram temple in the disputed premises here by the security personnel, police said today. A CRPF jawan, while trailing a snake last night, spotted the grenade under some shrubs, just 20 metres from the makeshift temple, they said. The grenade, presumably left behind by the terrorists who struck the complex on July 5, was handed over to the bomb-disposal squad, they said. On July 15, a grenade was recovered from behind the 'Sita raso' in the complex.

The Daily Excelsior, 22 August 2005

PM to seek assurance on end to terrorism

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will seek a firm assurance from Pakistan President Pervez

Musharraf on an end to Islamabad's support to cross-border terrorism when they meet on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in mid- September. While the two countries have in recent months taken a number of steps to push the peace process forward, India has repeatedly made it clear that not much progress can be achieved unless Pakistan puts a complete stop to its support to cross-border terrorism and ends infiltration. On Pakistan's repeated claims that it has dismantled terrorist infrastructure, the sources said, "We do not have satisfaction on this score yet." The sources said India was worried about the recent spurt in violence in Jammu and Kashmir though it had not rushed to blame Pakistan every time a fresh incident occurred. But the Prime Minister had made it clear to Gen Musharraf, when they spoke over the telephone on July 29, that it would be impossible to move forward in the peace process if Islamabad is not able to rein in the "jehadi" elements operating from Pakistani territory.

The Daily Excelsior, 22 August 2005

LeT militant held in AP

WARANGAL: Police arrested a suspected extremist belonging to Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) near railway station road in Warangal town last night. The militant was identified as Mohammed Iftaqar Ali alias Ashfaq (34). He has contacts with two LeT terrorists Azam and Aziz, who were involved in a bomb blast at a temple in Dilsuknagar in the state capital in 2002, according to police. Iftaqar went to Saudi Arabia in 1995 where he developed contacts with militants. He returned to India with a fake passport this year on May 11, the police added.

The Hindustan Times, 23 August 2005

Hizbul Mujahideen conduit arrested in Patna (Press Trust of India)

A man, who was allegedly working for terrorist group Hizbul Mujahideen, was on Monday arrested by the Delhi Police, SP (City) Rakesh Rathi said. The man, identified as Devendra Kumar Singh, was arrested during a raid at a house in Kadamkuan locality in east Patna. Rathi said acting on a tip-off, a Delhi Police contingent raided his hideout with the help of Patna Police and arrested Singh, alleged to be acting as a conduit for reaching funds to Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists.

The Daily Excelsior, 23 August 2005

UP too confirms Jaish hand

LUCKNOW: The July 5 fidayeen attack at Ramjanambhoomi in Ayodhya was the handiwork of terrorist outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad, according to the Uttar Pradesh Police. It was reported earlier that the militants who carried out the Ayodhya attack were from Lashkar-e-Toiba. Principal Secretary (Home) Alok Sinha said here that it was now confirmed that the terrorist outfit behind the Ayodhya attack was Jaish-e-Mohammed. "Police has confirmed about the hand of the Jaish in Ayodhya attack, following a joint investigation by the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Jammu and Kashmir Police and UP Police", Mr Sinha said. All the five militants were gunned down by the securitymen at Ramjanambhoomi complex on July 5 after they tried to attack the makeshift temple there.

The Hindustan Times, 23 August 2005

LeT militant arrested in Delhi (Press Trust of India)

Delhi Police has arrested a top Lashkar-e-Toiba militant from a south Delhi area, a senior police official said on Tuesday. Abu Razak Masood, the outfit's coordinator in Dubai, was arrested from Zakir Nagar area following a tip off, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Ajay Kumar said. The accused was involved in a blast in Hyderabad some time back and had been declared a proclaimed offender in the case, Kumar said.

The Hindu, 24 August 2005

Top Lashkar leader arrested in South Delhi

NEW DELHI: Abdul Razzak Masood, alleged chief coordinator of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Dubai who was wanted in the Sai Baba temple bomb blast case in Hyderabad in November 2002 and had been entrusted the task of recruiting people for "jihad" against India, has been arrested by the Delhi police at Jamia Nagar in South Delhi. According to the Joint Commissioner of Police, Karnal Singh, Abdul had come to the Capital from Muzaffarnagar on Monday and was at Jamia Nagar when a team led by Inspector M.C. Kotach, under the supervision of the Assistant Commissioner of Police, S.K. Tiwari, arrested him. In a startling revelation, Abdul purportedly told his interrogators that he was instrumental in carrying out the Ghatkopar blast in July 2003. He knew the conspirators of the American Center attack in January 2002 and had also provided them logistical support. In 2001, Abdul went to Pakistan on a fake Pakistani passport, stayed there in an LeT guesthouse in Lahore.

The Hindu, 24 August 2005

Bangladesh blasts confirm a suspicion (By Devesh K.Pandey)

NEW DELHI: The series of bomb blasts in Bangladesh this past week have confirmed the suspicion of the

intelligence agencies here that the country has become a hotbed for terrorist activities. In the run-up to the Independence Day celebrations this year the Delhi police were specifically told to be wary of intruders from the Indo-Bangladesh border. The Crime Branch of the Delhi police learnt about the nexus between militant outfits and the underworld dons in Bangladesh during their probe into the American Center attack case in Kolkata in 2002. It came to light that the attack was a joint operation of the Aftab Ansari gang and the terrorist outfits Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami (HUJI) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). The foundation of this pact was laid at Tihar Central Jail here where top militants like Maulana Masood Azhar, Omar Sheikh (Jaish-e-Mohammad), Mustaq Ahmed Zargar, Tahir, Akhtar Hussain, Asif Raza Khan (Hijbul Mujahideen) and Aftab Ansari were lodged between 1994 and 1999. Bangladesh was to be used as a transit place by the module.

The Indian Express, 24 August 2005

LeT's Dubai chief held in Delhi: Cops

New Delhi: The Dubai chief of Lashkar-e-Toiba, who has links with Osama Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network has been arrested in the Capital, the police said today. Abdul Razzak Masood, wanted in a Sai Baba temple bomb blast case in Hyderabad, helped recruit insurgents for attacks on US-led forces in Iraq, claimed officials. Masood, who was arrested from Jamia Nagar yesterday, arrived in India a few days before the Independence Day and came to Delhi from Muzaffarnagar, the police said. Though Masood was not an Al-Qaeda member, he actively helped its operatives with logistics, the police said. According to the police, Masood is a graduate from Nizamabad, Andhra Pradesh, also the hometown of LeT leader Azam Ghauri, shot dead in a 2000 encounter. On Ghauri's insistence, he travelled to J-K in 1998, received training from terrorists and then went to Dubai in 2000, the police said. After training in covert operations, Masood returned to Dubai in 2002 and was involved in a bomb blast outside a Sai Baba Temple in Hyderabad, the police said. A year later, he helped Ghatkopar blast case accused Imran escape to Pakistan. While Imran was later caught, Masood's attempt to provide safe passage to Amir Reza, the younger brother of Asif Reza, linked to the attack on the US Center in Kolkata, were more successful. Amir escaped from Dubai to Pakistan on Masood's passport, the police said. They also claimed he was in touch with Javed Sheikh, a key accused in a plot to assassinate Narendra Modi.

The Daily Excelsior, 24 August 2005

Ayodhya militants sold pan masala (Press Trust of India)

NEW DELHI: Investigations into the July five attack in Ayodhya have revealed that the two Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) militants killed by security forces had been selling match boxes and pan masala to cover up their recce exercise at the disputed site. Probe by central security agencies, who were tying the loose ends of the investigations, have shown that Arshad Ali and Asif (the two killed militants involved in the attack) had hired a house in Shejadpur locality of Akbarpur town in Ambedkar Nagar district, informed sources said. Some of the people, who had purchased pan masala from the slain militants, were also used to identify the pictures of the bodies of the ultras after the Ayodhya attack. Ali had purchased a hutch SIM card from Sultanpur where he had described himself as a retail seller of pan masala. The same SIM card proved essential during the investigations into the case. The sources said the sixth militant could be Jaish-e-Mohammed local commander Mohammed Kari, whose description was being made with the help of computer sketches. Earlier, it was found during the investigations by central security agencies that it was JeM and not Lashkar-e-Toiba which was behind the attack. Though UP and Jammu and Kashmir Police were trying hard to piece together their stories of Lashkar being involved in the attack, several leads clearly indicated involvement of JeM which includes evidences gathered by central agencies that Mohammed Kari, the absconding mastermind, was the local commander of JeM and not Lashker. It was also found that one of the five militants killed during the attack on July five had visited Deoband and had stayed there.

The Daily Excelsior, 24 August 2005

Court convicts Kashmiri militant (Press Trust of India)

NEW DELHI: A Delhi Court today convicted a Kashmiri militant who planted a bomb in a building in the busy Connaught Place area of the Capital in 2001. Additional Sessions Judge S C Rajan convicted Arzad Ahmed Qureshi, an activist of a Kashmir-based militant outfit Muslim Front, under various provisions of the Explosives Act after he pleaded guilty to the offence while the evidence was being recorded in the case. Acting on a tip-off, a police team recovered an explosive device containing one kilogram of RDX planted near a building in Connaught place on May 2, 2001. Following various leads, police arrested the convict from a lodge in the Jama Masjid area of Old Delhi two days later and recovered one kilogram RDX, two hand grenades, a timer pencil from his possession.

The Hindu, 25 August 2005

Bombs triggered in Bangladesh similar to ones used in India (By Devesh K.Pandey)

NEW DELHI: The bombs used in the recent serial blasts in Bangladesh appear similar to the ones used in the

explosions that rocked the Capital and neighbouring States from 1996 to 1998, according to a senior police officer here. Abdul Karim Tunda, a top Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant, was said to be the mastermind behind those blasts and he had set up base in Bangladesh to impart training to 'jehadi' elements in manufacturing such bombs. It is learnt that most bombs used in Bangladesh on August 17 were detonated with pencil batteries. All of them were of low-intensity and probably homemade. Interestingly, Tunda was expert at manufacturing such bombs, besides those made from potassium chlorate/ammonium nitrate base and sulphuric acid. In at least six of the blasts in Delhi during 1996-98, Tunda's men, who were from Pakistan and Bangladesh, had detonated bombs using pencil batteries.

The Indian Express, 26 August 2005

Don't be choosy in war on terror: Manmohan (Press Trust of India)

New Delhi: Lashing out at those using terrorism as a 'political instrument', Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Thursday said the war against the scourge should be waged jointly without indulging in 'pick and choose'. He said terror must be seen as a 'principal threat to democracy and development' as terrorist groups misuse the 'very values of openness, tolerance and freedom, upon which our societies are based'. Without naming any country but apparently referring to Pakistan, he said, "those who use terrorism as a political instrument challenge the most fundamental and precious values of democracy". "If a global war has to be waged against it, those who join cannot pick and choose. It is not possible to be an ally in one sector of the campaign, to subvert it in another and profess to be neutral in a third," Singh said... "One of the gravest challenges to democracy and human rights is terrorism. It reminds us that there are challenges which all of us face and must face together," he said. The Prime Minister said the aim of the terrorist groups is to 'negate the fundamental values of our society by forcing a diminution of openness, tolerance, rights and freedom'. He said terrorism is an attack on democracy and human rights.

The Indian Express, 27 August 2005

Terror, drugs high on India, Pak talks agenda

NEW DELHI: Terrorism and drug-trafficking are on the agenda of Union Home Secretary Vinod Duggal when he holds talks with the 11-member Pakistani delegation, headed by Interior Secretary Sayed Kamal Shah, that arrives here tomorrow. During the talks-part of the composite dialogue between India and Pakistan-Duggal is likely to raise the issue of terrorists and terrorist camps still surviving and operating out of Pakistan, despite promises. The Indian side will stress the need for decisive action by Pakistan to dismantle the camps, crack down on Jehadi elements and stop infiltration. Duggal is likely to point out that infiltration has increased since June. The recent attacks in J&K is likely to be discussed. The attack on Ayodhya, and the blast in Shramjivi Express are likely to come up, as investigations reveal a Pak link to both, sources said. Drug-trafficking and its terrorism links, drug cartels operating across the border, and drugs produced in Afghanistan being smuggled across the Indo-Pak border en-route to European countries are also on the agenda, sources said, adding that Duggal will seek more cooperation from Pakistan to make the border less porous to drugs.

The Hindustan Times, 29 August 2005

India to seek Dawood's deportation from Pakistan (Press Trust of India)

Ahead of Indo-Pak Home Secretary-level talks beginning in New Delhi on Monday, India on Sunday said it would seek deportation of nearly 30 terrorists and criminals including underworld don Dawood Ibrahim from Pakistan and push for an accord to combat drug-trafficking. "We will seek the deportation of all those who are involved in terrorist activities against India and are wanted in this country for serious crimes and terrorism-related activities and are based in Pakistan," Union Home Secretary VK Duggal said. Dawood is wanted in India in connection with Mumbai serial blasts of 1993 and other serious crimes. On whether new names of terrorists and criminals have been added to the list of twenty wanted men given to Pakistan by India during the NDA rule, Duggal said the list to be given during the Home Secretary level talks comprises nearly 30 names. He, however, declined to spell out the names in the list.

The Hindustan Times, 29 August 2005

Terrorism 'serious threat' to civil society: PM (Press Trust of India)

Declaring that terrorism posed a "serious threat to civilised existence," India on Sunday offered any kind of support to Afghanistan in dealing with the problem and announced a slew of developmental projects and schemes worth \$50 million for the war-ravaged country. On a two-day visit to "renew" old ties between the two countries, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told a joint press conference after his talks with President Hamid Karzai that a "modern, democratic and prosperous" Afghanistan was essential for the stability of the region. Noting that he had extensive discussions on how to strengthen bilateral cooperation, Singh said the talks also covered the "problem of terrorism that is afflicting the region and the world." "We discussed the terrorist threats worldwide as also to Afghanistan and India. There is a convergence that terrorism anywhere and everywhere poses a serious threat to

civilised existence and, therefore, we have an obligation to deal with this problem," he said when asked whether the issue of resurgence of Taliban in Afghanistan figured in the talks.

The Daily Excelsior, 29 August 2005

Manmohan, Karzai pledge to work together against terrorism

KABUL: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today announced a 50-million dollars additional assistance to Afghanistan and pledged to work together with Afghan President Hamid Karzai to ensure that his country never again becomes a haven for terrorism and extremism. A joint statement issued by the two countries after extensive talks between Dr Singh and President Karzai said the Prime Minister reaffirmed India's continued commitment to assisting Afghanistan in its economic reconstruction and rehabilitation programme. The joint statement said the two leaders condemned terrorism as a threat to democracy and declared that there could be no compromise with those who resorted to terrorism.

The Hindu, 30 August 2005

Held for supplying fake currency to Hizb men

NEW DELHI: A 36-year-old man has been arrested from Patna in Bihar by the Special Staff of the South-West Delhi police on charges of supplying counterfeit Indian currency notes to the Hizbul Mujahideen militants and other terrorist outfits operating from the Kashmir Valley. The fake notes were being smuggled in through Nepal. While the police recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition from them, they learnt that the accused dealt in fake currency notes, which were being supplied by one Birendra Kumar Singh of Arah in Bihar. The police raided his Patna hideout but he was missing. Acting on a tip-off that he had come back to his Patna hideout, a police team mounted a raid on August 22 and arrested Birendra while he was in possession of fake notes worth Rs. 82,000. The gang received fake currency notes through their conduits based in Nepal and supplied the consignments to terrorist outfits operating from the Kashmir Valley and to their other clients. Birendra allegedly disclosed that the gang had supplied fake notes worth over Rs. 40 lakhs to the Hizbul militants who were arrested in July.

The Daily Excelsior, 31 August 2005

India, Pak agree to eliminate terrorism

NEW DELHI: India and Pakistan today agreed to completely eliminate terrorism, release on September 12 all civilian prisoners and fishermen who have completed their sentence and whose national status has been confirmed, and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to intensify cooperation on drug control matters. The two sides also expressed commitment to take steps for complete elimination of terrorism and agreed that experts from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency would meet at mutually-convenient dates to work out modalities for implementation of the arrangement for cooperation between them. A 'joint statement' issued after the talks said the two sides had reiterated their commitment to combat terrorism and re-emphasised the need for effective steps for complete elimination of the menace. Although no word was given about what issues were discussed, sources said the Indian side had raised the issue of dismantling of the terrorist infrastructure that still exists in Pakistan, curbing of infiltration from across the border and reigning in of jihadis. He had said India would also convey its concern about a spurt in infiltration and terrorist activities and the existence of terrorist training camps in Pakistan or Pakistan-controlled territory. Minister of State for Home Sriprakash Jaiswal had also said India would raise the issue of deportation of those who are wanted in the country for serious crimes and terrorism-related activities so that they can face the due process of law.

The Hindustan Times, 31 August 2005

Dawood Ibrahim 'very much' in our sights: US (Press Trust of India)

As Pakistan insisted that underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, whose deportation is sought by India, is not in its territory, the US on Tuesday said the fugitive is "very much" in its sights and it would like to see individuals like him apprehended. India on Monday sought the deportation of Dawood and 30 other wanted people during the Home Secretary-level talks but Pakistan said that the underworld don was not in the country and lived "somewhere else". Asked about reports of terror camps continuing to operate in Pakistan, Mulford said "the US wants these camps to be disbanded". He said President George W Bush had taken up the issue with his Pakistani counterpart Pervez Musharraf. Mulford said the US regards Pakistan as a "valuable ally" in the war on terror and that Islamabad was itself taking action on this problem in that country and focussing on it.