

The Hindu, 1 August 2007

Haneef may have had prior knowledge

Melbourne: A chatroom conversation Indian doctor Mohammed Haneef had with his brother in India suggest that he may have had prior knowledge of the botched terror plot in the UK, Australian Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews said on Tuesday. Mr. Andrews gave details of what he said was intelligence information gleaned from the conversation to back his decision to cancel the doctor's working visa. He released advice from Solicitor General David Bennett QC which said information provided by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) was sufficient ground to revoke the visa.

Daily News Analysis, 2 August 2007

Juhu air facility on LeT alert

MUMBAI: The city police have enhanced security around the Juhu Aerodrome after receiving an intelligence advisory warning of a Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) strike. Pawan Hans operates its helicopter services out of the aerodrome. The LeT appears to be targeting Pawan Hans because it offers helicopter services to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), an intelligence official said. The advisory indicated that LeT operatives may infiltrate the city through its seafront to carry out the attack. We have received advisories on the possible infiltration by terrorists through the sea, Anti-terrorism Squad chief AP Raghuvanshi said. Deputy general manager of Pawan Hans HN Ghag confirmed that security had been elevated over the past week. Pawan Hans has nearly 40 security personnel of its own. Additional police personnel from the Santacruz and Juhu police stations have been assigned now, Ghag said. According to well-informed sources, specific intelligence suggests the LeT plans to follow up its July 11, 2006, serial train bombings with a devastating attack on the country's economy.

Daily News Analysis, 2 August 2007

Haneef was in contacts with Islamic radicals: Reports

MELBOURNE: Indian doctor Mohammed Haneef was regularly in contact with Islamic radicals under surveillance by British spy agency MI5, media reports here said on Thursday while a dossier said to be made by Bangalore police alleged him of having contacts with al-Qaeda. Highly classified intelligence documents leaked on Wednesday reveal the former Gold-Coast doctor 'still considered a person of interest by British and Australian investigators' made contact using medical chat rooms, international phone cards and phone boxes, 'The courier mail' newspaper said on Thursday. The intelligence suggests this was to avoid detection and suspicion. The leaked dossier, part of the information that formed a key plank in Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews' decision to revoke Haneef's visa, alleges the Indian-born doctor spoke to a number of suspects about a 'project' and a 'purpose' before the failed UK bombings. However, it's understood the intelligence does not contain information about a terrorist attack in Australia and only believes Haneef to be on the outer edge of a large group of like-minded people.

The Pioneer, 7 August 2007

Two LeT men get 7-year RI, Rs 50,000 fine

A Sessions court has sentenced seven years rigorous imprisonment and fine of Rs 50,000 to two terrorists of Lashker-e-Tayyeba (LeT) on Monday for possessing explosives, arms

and ammunitions in the year 2002. The Additional District and Sessions Judge Ravinder Kaur has convicted the duo- Shahid Ahmad Bakshi and Farhan Ali under various Sections of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. They were also charged with planning to assassinate Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi and some Sangh Parivar leaders but the court said that this could not be proved.

The Hindustan Times, 7 August 2007

Al-Qaeda video vows attacks against India, US missions

The Al-Qaeda warned in a new video on Sunday that India and US diplomatic missions were the terror network's "legitimate targets." In the footage compiled by Al-Qaeda's production arm As-Sahab, an unnamed narrator said that "the targeting of Tel Aviv, Moscow and Delhi" is also "our legitimate right" and accused India of "killing more than 100,000 Muslims in Kashmir with US blessing." It also singled out US missions in oil-rich Gulf Arab states as potential targets. "We shall continue to target you at home and abroad just as you target us at home and abroad," Adam Gadahn, a wanted American member of Al-Qaeda, said in the video. In a message to the Americans and their "Crusader allies," Gadahn said: "The amount of respect we have for your international law is even less than the respect you hold for defined sharia (Islamic law), and our observance of it is comparable to your observance of sharia." "How can we comply with a law which contradicts divine law in whole and in part?" Gadahn asked. "How can we recognise a law which states that the embassy or consulate is for all intents and purposes an inviolable fortress which the host country has no right to enter or monitor and when our sharia commands us to liberate every handspan of Islamic land occupied by the unbelievers?"

The Times of India, 9 August 2007

Editorial: Revisionists Hijack Islam

The glorification of violence is not only fostered by popular action films but is also endorsed by many religious traditions. Revenge is one of the most popular justifications for all the arson, torture, murder and mayhem that plague our world today. The slaughter of Sikhs after 1984, or Muslims after the Mumbai bomb blasts or in Gujarat after the torching of the Godhra train and even the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq were all justified by the idea of revenge. Evil is never committed with such enthusiasm as when it is done out of revenge and especially if it is done in the name of religion. All religions preach the faith of their founders but they also carry a huge baggage of customs that are social rather than spiritual...

Daily News Analysis, 10 August 2007

Intelligence agencies see a method in Qaeda madness

MUMBAI: Intelligence and security agencies are trying to establish a pattern which links the latest Al Qaeda video and possible infiltration by a section of West Asia-based terrorists into important Indian cities. A recent intelligence assessment warned of a strong likelihood of Yemen-based terrorists infiltrating into Mumbai and Delhi. Security agencies are trying to figure out if a section of local Jihadis has managed to forge "ties" with operatives of senior Al Qaeda leaders in Yemen. However, New Delhi sought to downplay the latest Qaeda threat which signalled a possible attack on diplomatic

missions in the capital, with the Centre choosing to dismiss the warning as an "extended threat".

IBN Live, 11 August 2007

Ayodhya attack mastermind killed in Jammu

New Delhi: Ayodhya attack mastermind and top Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) militant killed in an encounter in Jammu early on Saturday morning. Security personnel also arrested four of his associates. Acting on information that the JeM was planning a major attack in Jammu on the eve of Independence Day, the joint police team cordoned off Ramzan colony and raided a house of a woman named Maqsooda Begum. The sub-inspector of Delhi police, Devinder Singh, and a Pakistani militant were injured in the encounter. A large quantity of arms, ammunition and explosives were recovered.

The Hindu, 11 August 2007

Threat to blow up railway stations

AMBALA: The chief of an unidentified group, which claimed to have been involved in Samjhauta Express blasts, has threatened to blow up the railway stations of Ambala Cantonment and Amritsar on the Independence Day.

The Pioneer, 11 August 2007

Editorial: Al Qaeda in India

Apart from a huge, disaffected population that has been successfully tapped by lesser terror groups before, Osama bin Laden may be helped by a complacent and ignorant security establishment. On August 6, Union Minister of State for Home, Sri Prakash Jaiswal, made two points while reacting to an Al Qaeda video stating that Delhi was its "legitimate target" in the future. First, he said, there was no confirmed news of any such threat "till now". Second, he said, "Our forces are alert to avert any such attempt." Both the points betray fatal ignorance and criminal ineptitude on the part of the Government, as represented by Mr Jaiswal.

The Hindu, 16 August 2007

Bomb scare at Howrah station

KOLKATA: Security personnel were in a tizzy following a bomb scare after two tiffin-boxes containing a timer device were found in one of the compartments of a passenger train waiting to leave Howrah station on Wednesday morning. Bomb disposal experts were summoned and on examining the boxes concluded that the device was not an explosive. The boxes belonged to an engineering student and the device might be model of a project of his, the police surmised. The train's departure was delayed.

The Times of India, 21 August 2007

Mohammed Haneef's visa restored

BRISBANE: An Australian court on Tuesday overturned a government decision to cancel the visa of an Indian doctor who was charged over failed car bombings in Britain, Australian media reported. In a setback to the government, the Federal Court in Brisbane restored Mohammed Haneef's visa, opening the way for him to return to Australia. Haneef's lawyer Peter Russo said the court ruling had restored his client's life and career,

and urged Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews not to appeal the decision. Haneef, 27, was working at a state hospital on Australia's Gold Coast when he was arrested on July 2 and charged with providing support to a terror group. When Haneef was granted bail by a court, Andrews revoked his visa and refused to restore it even after the charges against him were dropped.

Deccan Herald, 21 August 2007

Kafeels last e-mail talks of martyrdom

Ahmed, 27, suffered more than 90 per cent burns after he drove a jeep laden with explosives into the airport terminal, in Britain's first attempted suicide car bombing. Prompt evidence. Evidence recovered pointing to his role in June's attempted attacks in London and Glasgow includes an e-mail message sent just before the Glasgow attempted bombing, talking of martyrdom; CCTV footage from one of the failed car bombings in London showing a man relatives say is Ahmed, running away; evidence from a computer he used, showing visits to bomb-making websites; and his mobile phone from the smouldering jeep. According to a source, Ahmed said that his actions were carried out in the name of Allah.

The Hindu, 25 August 2007

Red alert for LTTE operatives sounded along south-eastern coast

RAMANATHAPURAM: A red alert has been sounded along the south-eastern coast of Tamil Nadu following a reported message from Sri Lanka that a group of suspected operatives of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam had sneaked into the State for smuggling. The Navy and Coast Guard conducted a massive search operation on Thursday night by mobilising vessels deployed in the region. The police, the Coastal Security Group and other agencies conducted a combing operation along the coast.

Daily Excelsior, 25 August 2007

Editorial: Border management

India as an independent country has faced the problem of terrorism of one variety or the other, inspired and supported from across the border. The north-east cauldron simmered with the help of China followed by violence in Kashmir and Punjab backed by Pakistan. But we have yet to evolve a long-term, coherent counter-terrorist policy. To design an appropriate containment and deterrence strategy, Indian defence and security planners must grasp that terrorism is an effective political tool. Its effects stem less from its actual consequences than from the alarm it transpires. Being a form of unconventional, partisan warfare, conventional military response is not very effective in dealing with this menace.

The Hindu, 26 August 2007

34 killed as two blasts rock Hyderabad

HYDERABAD: Two explosions within minutes, one at an amusement park in front of the State Secretariat and another at a popular eatery in the busy Koti area, left at least 34 people dead and more than 50 injured in the city on Saturday. Another unexploded bomb was found in the Dilsukhnagar locality late in the night. Tension escalated in the capital, as the injured were rushed to hospitals in ambulances, city buses and cars. The 10,000-strong city police were ordered out on the streets to check any violent backlash. Till late

in the night, no untoward incidents were reported.

The Hindu, 26 August 2007

LTTE planning chemical attack

COLOMBO: The Sri Lankan Defence Ministry claimed on Saturday that the LTTE's plot to utilise chemical weapons in their future battlefields has been tracked by intelligence sources. In a report attributed to a news website operated out of the nation, the Ministry said there was enough evidence to prove that the LTTE already has built up stocks of cyanide and potassium during the ceasefire period. The Ministry also said the LTTE had an underground laboratory in the Adampan area bordering Mannar-Kilinochchi districts.

The Hindu, 26 August 2007

Hizb militant arrested in West Bengal

KOLKATA: The Border Security Force (BSF) apprehended a Hizb-ul-Mujahideen member and two Bangladeshis in the border areas of North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal on Wednesday, sources in the force said on Saturday. The man confessed to his involvement in grenade attacks at Shopian in Jammu and Kashmir, said Somesh Goel, Inspector General (South Bengal frontier), BSF. The militant admitted to having received training in Pakistan, Mr. Goel added. The accused has been handed over to the local police for further investigation.

The Asian Age, 27 August 2007

Editorial: Combat terror

The deadly twin blasts which rocked Hyderabad on Saturday evening and which took a toll of over 40 lives once again illustrated how vulnerable certain parts of India are to the menace of terrorism. The selection of public places like Lumbini Park and Gokul Chaat Bhandar at Kothi which attract large crowds on weekends was clearly aimed at killing as many innocent civilians as possible. Had the police not defused another bomb in Dilsukhnagar area, the casualties would have been even higher. It was only three months ago that nearly a dozen worshippers were slaughtered in another terrorist attack at the centuries-old historic Mecca Masjid in the heart of Andhra Pradesh's capital city. A day after the twin attacks, chief minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy said that terrorist groups from Pakistan and Bangladesh were suspected to be behind the mayhem. Of late, South India which was once free from terrorism, has become the target of the desperadoes.

The Times of India, 27 August 2007

Editorial: Terror, Again

They have struck again, this time in Hyderabad. The victims, like in any terror attack, are people who have nothing in common with mindless and heartless executors of mass murder. They were ordinary men and women who were going about life on a weekend and ended up paying an extraordinary price. It is not clear who were behind the bomb blasts. What motivated them is also unknown. The only certainty is the attacks were meant to strike at the foundations of civil society. Responses to the incident so far have been predictable.

The Pioneer, 27 August 2007

Hyderabad blast: over 720 suspects held

The Andhra Pradesh Government has declared on Sunday that the relatives of the bread earners who have been killed in yesterday's blasts will be provided with compensation and job. Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy has sought people's cooperation in this regard and said that the blasts were likely to be masterminded from a neighbouring country. Seven out of the forty-five students of the second year BE of Amrut Vahini Engineering College from Maharashtra who went to Hyderabad on a tour were perished in the blast at Lumbini Park while five were left injured. With the beef up of security in the wake of the attack, Chennai police has apprehended 720 suspects on Sunday.

The Hindu, 29 August 2007

Intelligence warning on terror plot failed to spark police action

NEW DELHI: Andhra Pradesh Director-General of Police M.A. Basith and Hyderabad Police Commissioner Balwinder Singh received warnings of an imminent terror strike just five days before Saturday's blasts, sources in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs have told The Hindu. Issued by the Intelligence Bureau, the written warning an Unofficial Order, or UO in government terminology recorded that a cell commanded by Karachi-based Islamist Abdul Sahed Mohammad had put plans in place for a major attack in the city. The UO provided an outline of available intelligence on the cell and its members.

The Pioneer, 29 August 2007

Editorial: To fight terror, enlist Muslims

Saturday's outrage in Hyderabad shows Government has failed to fight back terrorists and bust terror modules. A far better option would be to enlist the support of moderate Muslims to weed out those playing a dangerous game against the nation. Just when rain-washed Hyderabad was getting ready for a festive season - especially the thousands of marriages that were scheduled for last Sunday, an auspicious day - it turned out to be a Black Saturday. The twin bomb blasts at two crowded public places during the evening rush hour have shattered the city's calm with 43 people dead and as many injured. The only saving grace was the timely detection of a third bomb; had it not been found and defused, it would have led to more bloodshed.

The Hindu, 30 August 2007

Sketch of blast suspect released

HYDERABAD: The Hyderabad police on Wednesday released a computer-generated portrait of a person, suspected to have planted the bomb in Lumbini Park here on Saturday, and sought public assistance in identifying him. The portrait was made by a computer graphics expert from Mumbai on the basis of a description given by an injured person. The suspect could be in his twenties, five feet and eight inches tall, lean built and fair in complexion, Additional Commissioner M. Punna Rao said at a press conference. Mr. Rao appealed to all those who watched the laser show at the park to pass on any information on the suspect. Information could be passed through mobile numbers 094906 16002 or 094906 16129. Those giving useful information would be suitably rewarded and their identity would not be revealed, he said.

Daily Excelsior, 31 August 2007

Editorial: Issues need to be tackled

We have another 'terror-ist' attack in Andhra Pradesh with 50 killed and hundreds injured and 'sleeper units' who have done this can with comfort go to 'sleep' again as we simply refuse to act on 'security' issues in preference to vote bank politics. We have 'millions' of illegal immigrants from Bangla Desh and whilst the vast majority come for 'economic reasons' there are many others who come to spread death and destruction. We blame the police and security for 'intelligence' failures but the real blame is lack of effective decision making at the political level. I have got tired of writing on this issue for the past few years and I think the Congress and the Left will see the back lash of this in Gujarat in the next few months and the revival of the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra.

The Hindu, 31 August 2007

2 Bangladeshis picked up in city

HYDERABAD: City police on Thursday picked up a Bangladeshi national Mohd. Gazi, who resembled the twin blasts suspect, and his female companion Jaana of the same country, it is learnt. Police sources said a driving licence, a ration card and some income tax documents, all in the name of Gazi with his photos, were seized after a subsequent raid on his rented house in old city. The man and woman are being questioned. On Wednesday, a bangle shop owner in Ladbazar grew suspicious when Jaana gave a currency note of Rs. 1,000 denomination for purchasing some articles. Suspecting that it was a counterfeit note, he alerted the police. Failing to answer queries of the police, the woman revealed she was a Bangladeshi and had come to city to meet her relative Gazi.

The Indian Express, 31 August 2007

Editorial: To be a hard state

Mumbai 1993, Coimbatore 1998, Jammu & Kashmir Assembly complex 2001, Parliament 2001, Akshardham 2002, Jammu army camp 2003, Mumbai car bombs 2003, Assam bomb 2004, Ram Janmabhoomi 2005, Delhi blasts 2005, Varanasi 2006, Mumbai train bombs 2006, Malegaon 2006, Hyderabad Masjid 2007 and now Hyderabad again on August 25. This is a list of major terrorist incidents Indian citizens have been subjected to in the last 14 years. To say India is second only to Iraq in terms of civilian lives lost is to state the obvious. There is some cross-country literature on the link between political freedom and terrorism. In autocratic and dictatorial countries, political freedoms are low, but terrorist acts are also difficult. And in advanced democracies where political freedoms are high, terrorist acts are rare as the political process provides a vent. Terrorist incidents are highest in intermediate democracies. India ought to be in the advanced zone, but seems to be in the intermediate category.

The Pioneer, 31 August 2007

Editorial: No will to fight terror

The Hyderabad bombings have brought to the fore the seriousness of the terrorist threat the country faces. With such incidents happening again and again, and the Government following an ostrich-like approach, people have been left to their fate. The shocking Hyderabad twin blasts, killing 43 people, have brought to the fore the seriousness of the terrorist menace the country faces. The bombing took place 100 days after the Mecca

Masjid blasts in Hyderabad, but this time the devastation is much more. With these frequent attacks many fear that Hyderabad may soon lose its primacy as the IT hub. The fact that the Lok Sabha took up the issue under an adjournment motion and the Rajya Sabha almost suspended its Question Hour and discussed the issue on Wednesday shows the importance of the matter.