

The Hindu, 17 December 2005

Bomb threat disrupts Parliament

NEW DELHI: A bomb threat through e-mail on Friday led to the abrupt adjournment of both Houses of Parliament and quick evacuation of the members and others. Work remained suspended for about three hours, and the Houses reassembled after an "all-clear" signal was given. The e-mail, received by the American Consulate in Chennai from browsing centres in south Tamil Nadu, threatened to blow up Parliament and American consulates in the country. On receiving the message, purportedly from a supporter of Osama bin Laden, the consulate informed the Chennai police, who alerted authorities in Delhi. Speaker Somnath Chatterjee adjourned the Lok Sabha at 11.52 a.m. during question hour when he was informed of the threat; he did not give any reason for his action. The Rajya Sabha followed suit. With Parliament having observed the fourth anniversary of the December 13 on it attack this week, Friday's sudden dispersal led to some confusion.

The Hindu 19 December 2005

ISI behind Task Force office blast: police

HYDERABAD: Pakistan's ISI plotted the explosion in the Hyderabad police Task Force office on Dasara night and got it carried out through a Bangladeshi suicide bomber with the help of pan-Islamic terrorist groups, the police announced on Sunday. The breakthrough comes 66 days after the blast at Greenlands, very close to the Chief Minister's residence. The police said two Hyderabad-based youngsters -- Kaleem and Mohd. Abdul Zahed -- were arrested. "Some more locals aided and abetted terrorist activities being orchestrated by outfits like Jaish-e-Mohammed, Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and Harkat-ul-Jehad-al-Islami. Raids are on to nab them," Hyderabad Police Commissioner A.K. Mohanty told a press conference...

The Hindu 21 December 2005

Security forces put on high alert (United News of India)

AMRITSAR: Security forces in Punjab have been put on high alert following intelligence inputs about the possible strike by militants in the border State and the Union Territory of Chandigarh. Informing this here on Tuesday, IGP (Jalandhar zone) Hardip Singh Dhillon told UNI that preventive steps had been put in place following the threat. He said security would be further tightened, particularly in the major cities and towns of the State, during the New Year celebrations... The IGP said police officers had been instructed to educate the public not to touch any unclaimed object and to inform the police immediately... Asked about the terrorist groups that could strike in Punjab the IGP said Babbar Khalsa, Khalistan Commando Force (KCF) and the Khalistan Zindabad Force led by Ranjit Singh Neeta were only the outfits that still had the fire power to carry out subversive activities. However, strikes by Kashmiri outfits could not be ruled out considering the proximity of Punjab with J&K and the nexus that the Punjab and Kashmiri militants had in the past, he added.

The Hindu 27 December 2005

Hyderabad STF office blast: three militants arrested in Delhi

NEW DELHI: Three militants, allegedly belonging to the Bangladesh-based terrorist outfit Harkat-ul-Jehad-e-Islami, and involved in the Special Task Force (STF) office blast in Hyderabad this October, have been arrested by the Special Cell of the Delhi police. The militants, one of whom was trained in a camp run by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence near the Baluchistan border, were to target the Bangalore Software Park, the Hyderabad Hi-tech City, certain politicians, railway stations and busy places in Delhi and other parts of north India ...

The Daily Excelsior 27 December 2005

Hizbul ultra held in Ajmer

JAIPUR: A Hizbul Mujahidden terrorist was today arrested in Rajasthan's Ajmer district and three AK-47 rifles along with a huge cache of ammunition were recovered from his possession. Sabir Ahmed was nabbed while he was on his way to Hyderabad from Kashmir via Ajmer driving a truck with a J-K registration number, Director General of Police A S Gill said. Three AK-47 rifles, 15 detonator and 299 cartridges were also recovered from his possession, he said... Initially Sabir was a member of JKLF and had been to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in 1991 for training and later he joined Hizbul Mujahideen, Rao added.

The Indian Express 29 December 2005

Terror hits Bangalore, target is IISc

BANGALORE (Karnataka): Terror struck an international conference at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) campus on Wednesday night killing a retired Mathematics professor from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, M.C. Puri, and seriously injuring four others including one of the inventors of the Simputer, Prof Vijay Chandru from IISc. The attack was, according to eyewitness accounts, carried out by a lone gunman who wielded an AK-47 and threw hand grenades. The attacker was driven away in a white Ambassador car immediately after the attack, eyewitnesses said. The other injured persons have been identified as Dr Pankaj Gupta from Delhi, P Patel, a lab assistant at the Cadila Lab in the IISc campus, and a woman identified only as Sonia, an assistant

professor at IIM, Lucknow... "We don't know who is responsible for the attack. We have ruled out any link between the attack and Abu Salem's presence in Bangalore," DGP B S Sial said. Following the attack, the Bangalore police imposed a nakabandhi in the city and were screening all vehicles...

The Hindu 29 December 2005

Alert in city following attack in Bangalore

HYDERABAD: The police sounded an alert in the city on Wednesday night following the attack by persons suspected to be terrorists at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore. Police Commissioner A.K. Mohanty said security at all strategic places in the city had already been stepped up following the blast at the Commissioner's Task Force office a couple of months ago. Though the persons behind the attack in Bangalore are yet to be identified, scientific laboratories and defence establishments here have been asked to be cautious ...

The Indian Express 29 December 2005

Tech capital figured on terror radar

NEW DELHI: The terrorist attract at IISc was waiting to happen. At least, that's what investigative agencies were told as they interrogated several terrorists arrested recently. Sources said these agencies had informed the Home Ministry that the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) had been planning to attack Bangalore, India's software capital. While J-K police have suggested that the attack could be the work of an LeT cell that evaded capture recently, a suspected terrorist arrested in Hyderabad had told interrogators in Delhi that Bangalore was on the hitlist of certain Bangladesh outfits. Ministry sources, however, said the IISc was never mentioned as specific target and the LeT's involvement, if any, remains unconfirmed... Meanwhile, a suspected Harkat-ul-Jehad operative arrested by Hyderabad police and brought to Delhi by the Special Cell, last week, had revealed that Bangalore was the target of militants operating from Bangladesh... This March, the Special Cell had also busted an LeT module, which had on its target many Bangalore-based software companies and HAL, apart from IMA, Dehradun. The terrorists had even visited several places in Bangalore.

The Hindu 30 December 2005

A terrorist strike: Dharam Singh (K.V. Subramanya)

BANGALORE: Karnataka Chief Minister N. Dharam Singh has confirmed that Wednesday's attack on the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) here was the handiwork of terrorists. After reviewing security measures with officials on Thursday, he told presspersons that the police were yet to ascertain the identity of the terrorist organisation, which carried out the "planned attack"... Mr. Dharam Singh said that though no outfit claimed responsibility, the use of sophisticated weapons clearly suggested that the intruders were terrorists. The police found some clues and were working on them... The police on Thursday found an AK-56 assault rifle, a hand grenade and an empty magazine of an automatic rifle near the J.N. Tata auditorium on the IISc campus... Sources in the security and intelligence agencies told The Hindu that the casing of the bullets indicated that they were fired from more than one weapon, probably from the AK-56 rifle and an AK-47 rifle. The fact that at least two weapons were used and grenades lobbed clearly indicated that more than two persons carried out the attack, the sources said...

The Hindu 30 December 2005

Terrorist attack was predicted (Praveen Swami)

NEW DELHI: The Karnataka Government received a warning of an imminent terrorist strike in Bangalore less than a fortnight before Wednesday's attack in the Indian Institute of Science. Sources said the warning was based on an Intelligence Bureau operation that monitored communication between two Lashkar-e-Taiba operatives in New Delhi. Although intelligence sources admitted the warning did not contain information that could have enabled the Bangalore police to prevent the strike, they said officials and institutions had been slow to address their vulnerabilities. Lashkar operatives had been attempting to execute a major strike in Bangalore since 2001, in the months preceding the Jaish-e-Mohammad attack on Parliament House... Lashkar activities were then scaled down by Pakistan's covert services during the 2001-02 India-Pakistan crisis to prevent a war-provoking incident... Despite the successes Indian counter-terrorism organisations have registered against the Lashkar, the Pakistan-based group has proved remarkably resilient to high-level penetration.

The Hindu 30 December 2005

Lashkar-linked magazine calls for attacks (Praveen Swami)

NEW DELHI : The December issue of the Voice of Islam, a Pakistan-based journal closely affiliated to the Lashkar-e-Taiba, has called for "retaliation and requital" of the fall of Dacca to Indian forces on December 16, 1971. Released in print and on the Internet earlier this month, the aggressive anti-India polemic in the Voice of Islam has fuelled speculation that its call for retaliatory attacks may have been connected to the timing of yesterday's tragic terrorist attack on the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore. Arguing that the injunctions of Islam forbid "military surrender and even running away from a battle," the current issue of the Voice of Islam demands that retaliation against India be made a part of "the expression of our national aims and military

doctrine." December 16, it insists, needs to be remembered "not just with grief and frustration," but as a day "for retaliation and requital." Authored the retired Pakistani naval commodore Tariq Majeed, the article on Pakistan's defeat in the war of 1971 claims the debacle was the consequence of "the subversion and sabotage that their Hindu population was committing." Majeed writes that the citizens of Bangladesh have now come to realise "the serious threat of subversion at home and turned to combat it." In Majeed's vision, a renewed war against India would be made legitimate by what he describes as "the savage cruelties being committed by India on the Muslims in Occupied Kashmir"... Voice of Islam's December issue also carries a long editorial opposing the ongoing India - Pakistan détente process, saying moves towards peace are part of a "conspiracy against Islam and Pakistan"...

The Hindustan Times 30 December 2005

On New Year's eve, suicide bombers threaten attacks (Associated Press)

BANGALORE: Suicide bombers threatened in letters sent to local media that they would target a top politician and launch attacks against New Year's revellers in the city of Bangalore, police said on Friday. A letter from a previously unknown group outlining the threatened attacks in Bangalore was faxed to several newspapers late on Thursday, the director-general of police, BS Sial, said. "It will be the most coordinated attack the country has ever seen," television channel CNN-IBN quoted the letter, written in English, as saying. Six attackers will trigger explosions including, "two human bombs to target the state chief minister," Moin-ud-Din of the Al-Jehadi group said, according to the report...

The Hindu 31 December 2005

Flaws in counter-terror practices (Praveen Swami)

NEW DELHI: Responding to growing disquiet over the Bangalore police's handling of intelligence warnings that preceded Wednesday's attack on the Indian Institute of Science, the Union Home Ministry has ordered a review of counter-terrorism procedures in all major cities. At meetings between Home Ministry bureaucrats and intelligence officials, two major structural problems have been identified in the events leading up to the Bangalore attack. First, police authorities in Karnataka failed to pursue intelligence leads about the terrorist threat to Bangalore and other cities in the State. Second, counter-terrorism police practices that have become routine in other major cities do not seem to have been rigorously enforced in Bangalore, despite information that top terrorist commanders regularly visited India's information technology capital... At least four separate warnings of an imminent strike on information-technology facilities were issued this year alone, the last on the basis of interrogation of three Harkat-ul-Jihad terrorists arrested from Kolkata and Hyderabad. While the Lashkar-e-Taiba, rather than the Harkat-ul-Jihad, is thought to have executed the attack on the IISc, officials noted that the Bangalore police's handling of the last warning illustrated what they described as a casual approach to counter-terrorism... Sources in the Union Home Ministry told The Hindu they were especially concerned over the Bangalore police's failure to practise routine counter-terrorism procedures in response to the alerts...

The Indian Express 31 December 2005

Terror still roadblock to Indo-Pak talks

NEW DELHI: While the investigating agencies work on the evidence indicating involvement of Lashkar-e-Taiba in Wednesday's terror attack in Bangalore, India feels strongly that Pakistan is not doing enough to end cross-border terrorism. According to official sources, cross-border terrorism continues to "hang like a big question mark" over the peace process... Though there has been no reduction in terrorist attacks, official sources said India was keeping doors of dialogue open, but will discuss the issue of terrorism when the foreign secretaries of both countries meet on January 17-18 here. India, however, has maintained that both these issues were internal decisions for New Delhi. The question of more autonomy to J&K was, in fact, a matter between the Centre and the state. This was also conveyed to Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, when he raised the issue with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at Dhaka... On a similar note, official sources said India has been expressing its "disquiet" over the growing fundamentalist activities in Bangladesh. They underlined that terrorism was a danger to India and Bangladesh and the region...