

The Hindu, 1 May 2006

Abducted engineer killed by Taliban

New Delhi: Indian telecom engineer K. Suryanarayana, who was kidnapped by the Taliban in Afghanistan two days ago, has been killed by his abductors. His body was found between Qalat and Ghazni in the southern part of the country on Sunday morning. Describing the killing as "premeditated," India on Sunday said Mr. Suryanarayana was murdered even before a team led by an External Affairs Ministry official reached Kabul. Confirming the news, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said at a press conference here that Mr. Suryanarayana's body was found between Qalat and Ghazni on Sunday morning. "It is obvious that the kidnappers were not interested in negotiating for his release but had premeditated his killing. The outrageous demand that all Indians should leave Afghanistan within 24 hours testifies to the real motivation behind this act of terror," he said. An agency report quoted a Taliban spokesman as saying Mr. Suryanarayana was shot dead as he tried to escape... Mr. Saran said India was appalled by "this dastardly and inhuman act of terror" on the part of the Taliban and its sponsors. The slain engineer, who was working for a Bahrain company Al Moayed, had, like many of his compatriots, been making a contribution to Afghanistan's reconstruction...

The Hindu, 2 May 2006

Four killed in Vadodara

Vadodara: Four persons were killed and 22 injured in violence caused by the demolition of a dargah by local authorities in Fatehpura here on Monday. An indefinite curfew was clamped in six areas as trouble spread and threatened to take a communal turn. Police reinforcements were rushed from Ahmedabad and other towns. In the evening, police described the situation as tense but under control. Minister of State for Home Amit Shah said it was not communal violence but a clash between police and Municipal Corporation staff, on one side, and Muslim residents who objected to the demolition of the dargah, on the other. The structure was blocking a road that the Corporation had taken up for expansion. The incident threatened to take a communal turn with two incidents of stabbing reported, including one from a neighbouring locality. Trouble started when a Corporation team went with police in the afternoon to demolish the dargah of Sayed Sarsiddin Baba to widen the road. Residents claim that the dargah near the Champaneri gate is more than 300 years old. Objecting to the demolition, the residents threw stones at the municipal staff and police. The police lathicharged a mob and fired teargas shells to disperse it. When their efforts failed, police opened fire resulting in the death of two persons and injuries to 14 persons. At least eight others, including police and municipal staff, were injured in stone throwing...

The Indian Express, 3 May 2006

Vadodara back on edge, fresh violence erupts at midnight

Vadodara, May 2: The city was back on the edge late tonight after a man was burnt alive in his car in the Ajwa Road area in the city's eastern outskirts in latest violence in the wake of the dargah demolition on Monday. Reports of communal clashes were coming in from at least three neighbourhoods past midnight. Mobs had gathered on Ajwa Road where there are residential colonies of both Hindu and Muslim communities. According to the police, a mob stopped a van (GJ-6-AA-8258) and burnt its sole occupant later identified as Mohammedrafiq Abdulgani Vora, 35, of the nearby Kismet Colony. DCP Siddharth Khatri said the incident happened before the police or fire-brigade could reach the spot. He said the mob had been dispersed and Rapid Action Force deployed in the area. Police also said people were being evacuated to safety from the Ajabdi Mills area. Earlier today, sporadic clashes and stone-pelting were reported in some areas and one person was killed in police firing, taking to five the toll in the violence. Police fired at a rioting mob at around 2 am in Motivohrawaad area, killing one person while two others were injured in clashes.

The Hindu, 3 May 2006

The Hindu

Vadodara, May 3: Fresh violence broke out here today following burning alive of a man in his car last night as the Centre dispatched five companies of 500 paramilitary personnel to contain the situation in the city. Two factories were set on fire by a mob in Sardar Industrial area of curfew-bound Panigate and sporadic violence, including incidents of stone-pelting, were reported from some parts of the city, police sources said. The authorities withdrew their earlier decision to relax curfew in Navapure, Wadi, Raopura, Panigate and Karelilig following last night's incident in which a mob set ablaze a car burning alive a person in Arjuwa Road. Security in the troubled areas has been tightened after last night's incident, they said. Amidst charges of police inaction, the Centre reviewed the situation and decided to dispatch five companies of paramilitary forces, including four of Rapid Action Force, to assist the Gujarat Police. A Home Ministry spokesman said "Home Minister Shivraj Patil has spoken to Gujarat

Chief Minister Narendra Modi over telephone and asked him to make all efforts to bring the situation in Vadodara under control."...

Daily Times, 3 May 2006

Vienna: United Nations chief Kofi Annan on Tuesday unveiled a global counter-terrorism strategy that puts new emphasis on the need to address bioterrorism

Vienna: United Nations chief Kofi Annan on Tuesday unveiled a global counter-terrorism strategy that puts new emphasis on the need to address bioterrorism, counter terrorists' growing use of the Internet and defending human rights. The 32-page strategy, responding to a call by world leaders at their summit here last September for enhanced UN coordination of the global fight against terrorism, sidestepped the question of defining what terrorism is. "It is also essential that member states conclude, as soon as possible, a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism," Annan said as he outlined his proposals to the 191-member General Assembly. "However, lack of progress in building consensus on a convention cannot be a reason for delay in agreeing on a strategy," he added. For nearly nine years, diplomats have been sweating over a draft convention that would encompass previous texts on the fight against terrorism, including bombings, financing and nuclear and biological threats. But they have so far stumbled over an acceptable definition of terrorism, particularly in the Middle East, where groups seen by some countries as terrorists are viewed by others as freedom fighters. Annan's counter-terrorism strategy is articulated around what he called the "five Ds": 1) Dissuading people from resorting to terrorism or supporting it. 2) Denying terrorists the means to carry out an attack. 3) Deterring states from supporting terrorism. 4) Developing state capacity to defeat terrorism. 5) Defending human rights. Annan's report underscored the need for "innovative solutions" to prevent bioterrorism. "The approach to fighting the abuse of biotechnology for terrorist purposes will have more in common with measures against cybercrime than with the work to control nuclear proliferation," it noted. Annan also stressed that a prerequisite to an effective counter-terrorism strategy was defending the "human rights of all — of the victims of terrorism, of those, of those suspected of terrorism, of those affected by the consequences of terrorism." "States must ensure that any measures taken to combat terrorism comply with their obligation under international law, in particular human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law," Annan told UN member states. "Any strategy that compromises human rights will play right into the hands of the terrorists." The General Assembly is to hold consultations on Annan's recommendations on May 11.

The Indian Express, 4 May 2006

Gujarat 2006 versus Gujarat 2002 (Milind Ghatwai, Shiv Aroor & Verghese K George)

Vadodara, New Delhi, May 3: The city is still tense, the flashpoints still simmer, the images of the stone-pelting mobs and the charred car disturbingly familiar. And yet there was no missing one fact today: Gujarat 2006 was different from Gujarat 2002. The reason: A more responsive Chief Minister Narendra Modi quick on his feet and an "Opposition" Centre putting its foot down.... One key reason behind the UPA response is political. Congress strategists consider the 2002 riots a factor behind the party's electoral success in 2004 and realise any "slow approach" will cost it dearly...

The Indian Express, 4 May 2006

In Vadodara, Modi warns rioters: we won't spare you (Ayesha Khan and Soumik Dey)

Vadodara, May 3: As his government maintained that the Vadodara violence was not communal, Chief Minister Narendra Modi visited the city today and warned rioters "whichever community they belong to, the law will do its duty". Though he did not go to the Walled City area—barring sporadic incidents, Vadodara was calm today and the Army staged a flag march—Modi called on the injured, most of them Muslims, at the SSG Hospital and warned rioters of strict action. "No unsocial element or rioter will be spared nor allowed to take the law into his hands," he said, calling for peace and reminding people of Gujarat's remarkable progress in the last four years...

The Hindu, 5 May 2006

Curfew relaxed in Vadodara (Manas Dasgupta)

Vadodara: The riot-hit Vadodara city was incident-free on Thursday as the Army staged a flag march in curfew-bound areas of the city. The only incident reported since Wednesday and before the Army moved in late on Wednesday night was a group clash in Navapura. Police fired five rounds to disperse the stone-pelting mobs. No one was injured in the firing. The indefinite curfew was relaxed in a phased manner for two hours in each of the six police station areas but only for women and children to purchase essential commodities. The authorities hinted at the possibility of more curfew relaxations on Friday if the situation continued to improve. While an additional nine companies of paramilitary forces, including the Border Security Force, the Central Reserve Police Force and the

Rapid Action Force, were deployed in the affected areas to assist the local police, the Army columns kept taking rounds periodically providing a sense of security among the people hit by riots. At the instance of party president Sonia Gandhi, a delegation of the All India Congress Committee led by secretary Manish Tiwari, also in-charge of the Gujarat affairs, visited the affected areas and appealed to the people for peace...

The Indian Express, 5 May 2006

Centre cites tension in Vadodara, SC stays HC order on demolition (R Venkataraman)

New Delhi, May 4: The Supreme Court today stayed the Gujarat High Court order directing authorities to remove all religious structures encroaching public land in the state. The stay was ordered by Justices Ruma Pal and Dalveer Bhandari on an urgent plea by the Union Government during mentioning hour. Additional Solicitor General Gopal Subramanian opposed the May 2 order, pointing out that the situation in the state was tense. The demolition of a dargah in Vadodara led to clashes on Monday and Tuesday, leaving six dead. The High Court, Subramanian contended, had acted on its own on the basis of a newspaper report, "without verifying the facts". He quoted from a Home Ministry report to point out that the situation in Vadodara was tense, and that the Army had staged a flag march. The High Court had treated as writ petition a newspaper report that various religious structures encroached public land in the state. It had directed the authorities to take necessary action and sought a reply by May 5....

Daily Times, 5 May 2006

Massive sectarian violence feared (Khalid Hasan)

Washington: Human Rights Watch (HRW) has warned that the possibility of a return to massive sectarian violence in Gujarat must be forestalled with prompt action by government authorities. In a report released on Thursday, the watchdog group said recent anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat have left six dead and have coincided with violence in Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir, where militant groups massacred at least 35 Hindus on April 30 and May 1. It urged the Indian government, the state governments of Gujarat and Jammu and Kashmir, and the Pakistan government to take all steps possible to protect religious minorities in the two regions. "These incidents show the extreme vulnerability of religious minorities in different parts of India," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "Instead of allowing this violence to deepen religious hatred, the authorities should launch an immediate, thorough and transparent investigation to ensure that those responsible are prosecuted and punished." HRW said police and prosecutors at the national and state levels should launch criminal investigations and initiate appropriate prosecutions against the perpetrators and organisers of the attacks in Gujarat. The Indian National Human Rights Commission should launch its own, independent investigations. The same steps should be taken to address the massacres in Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan should also investigate the possible responsibility of militant groups operating from its territory. HRW said the situation in Gujarat is tense and Muslim residents fear a repeat of the 2002 state-backed riots. The army has been called in to prevent an escalation of violence.

Indian Express, 6 May 2006

Police explore links between Varanasi blasts, IISc attack

Bangalore, May 5: As part of the investigations into the still unsolved Indian Institute of Science (IISc) terror attack, the Bangalore Police are exploring the links of seven people arrested in connection with the Varanasi blasts. Bangalore Police Commissioner Ajay Kumar Singh is in UP to quiz the accused in the Varanasi blasts. Of particular interest to the Bangalore Police is the link between the Varanasi accused and Bangladesh-based wings of the Harkat-ul-Jehadi Islami and the Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist outfits. These links could have a bearing on the IISc case, sources said. The Bangalore Police are exploring a theory that the December 28, 2005, IISc attack, in which a retired Delhi University mathematics professor was killed, was carried out by terrorists based in Bangladesh with links to the HuJI and the JeM, while being funded, supported by the LeT. The Huji and JeM link emerged in the Varanasi case when one of the main accused Mohammed Walliullah, a HuJI operative, revealed that the blasts were executed under the instructions of Asadullah, a Bangladesh-based HuJI commander with JeM links...

Indian Express, 8 May 2006

Blast at Hyderabad cinema, 2 hurt (Press Trust of India)

Hyderabad: Two persons, including a girl, sustained injuries when a crude bomb exploded inside a cinema hall at Chikkadpally late on Sunday night. The blast occurred in the balcony of Odean Cinema after the interval of the night show of a Telugu film, police said. Furniture in the theatre was damaged. Senior police officers rushed to the spot along with the bomb squad. The injured were rushed to Gandhi hospital and the theatre vacated for a search.

Hindustan Times, 8 May 2006

Curfew relaxed in parts of Vadodara (Indo-Asian News Service)

Vadodara, May 7: Curfew was relaxed on Sunday for seven hours in parts of Vadodara with situation returning to normal and no violence reported over the past three days, the police said. On Sunday, curfew was lifted from 9 am to 4 pm, said Vadodara Police Commissioner Deepak Swarup. Curfew was imposed in the walled city areas following clashes that erupted after a dargah was razed in a demolition drive by the civic authorities. Six people were killed in three days of violence. The army was deployed in six neighbourhoods of the city, about 110 km from Ahmedabad, on Wednesday night to bring the violence under control. The troops were withdrawn from Kareli Baug and Rao Pura areas on Saturday.

The Hindu, 9 May 2006

Lashkar militant killed in Delhi

New Delhi: A Pakistani national allegedly belonging to the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) was gunned down in an encounter with the police outside Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Monday night. The encounter followed the arrest of two other LeT militants at Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station earlier in the evening. A team led by Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Ajay Kumar arrested the militants when they arrived by the Mumbai-Amritsar Golden Temple train. Four kg of RDX, four detonators and Rs. 50,000 were seized from them. The two said they had come to deliver the consignment to another Pakistani they were to meet near the stadium. Police lay in wait and challenged the terrorist when he arrived for the rendezvous. But he opened fire at the police and in the retaliatory firing was wounded. He was rushed to the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences where he was declared dead on arrival.

The Indian Express, 9 May 2006

Varanasi Blasts: Prime accused killed in an encounter (Agencies)

New Delhi, May 9: In a major breakthrough, Jammu and Kashmir police on Tuesday gunned down one of the main conspirators behind the March 7 Varanasi blasts in an encounter in North Kashmir's Handwara area. Zubair, a resident of Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh, was shot dead in a fierce gunbattle with the police, inspector general, police (Kashmir range) K Rajendra revealed. "We had a specific input about him at least a month back and we were trailing him ever since. He could have been trying to flee to Pakistan," Rajendra said. However according to a news channel report, police had tracked him down on the basis of information provided by a contingent of UP police currently camping in the state. Zubair was a member of the outlawed Harkat-ul-Jehadi-Islamia (Huji), which is operating from Bangladesh. The twin blasts in the Sankatmochan Temple and the cantonment railway station of the temple city of Varanasi had left close to 20 dead and nearly 100 injured.

Hindustan Times, 9 May 2006

Hyderabad blast was due to foreign grenade: Police (Indo-Asian News Service)

Hyderabad, May 8: The blast in a cinema theatre in Hyderabad that injured two people was caused by a foreign-made grenade, police reported on Monday after preliminary investigations. Two people, including a 17-year-old girl, were injured in the blast on Sunday night. It was earlier thought to be a crude bomb. Police Commissioner AK Mohanty said it appeared to be a grenade explosion, but added that it would be too early to comment on who could be behind the act... Police sources did not rule out the involvement of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence or the terror groups backed by it. They pointed out that these groups were involved in five to six blasts that occurred in the city during the last seven years. Two people, including a suspected suicide bomber from Bangladesh, were killed in a blast in October last year at the police task force office in Begumpet, a few yards from the official residence of the chief minister. Three people were killed in the powerful explosion at the Sai Baba temple in the Dilsukhnagar area three years ago. Minor blasts also occurred at various other places in the city.

The Hindu, 10 May 2006

Arrested militants had planned to target Kandla (Devesh K. Pandey)

New Delhi: The two alleged Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militants arrested by the Special Cell of the Delhi police at Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station on Monday planned to target Kandla Port, a railway bridge and a market at Ahmedabad besides film awards ceremonies in Mumbai. A huge consignment of arms and explosives and a satellite phone have been recovered from the Ballabgarh hideout of their Pakistani accomplice who was killed in an encounter with the police outside the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in South Delhi on Monday night. According to Joint Commissioner of Police Karnal Singh, the militants have identified themselves as Feroz Abdul Latif Ghaswala alias Abdullah, a resident of Mumbai, and Mohammad Ali, a resident of Ahmedabad. Abdullah, who is

computer literate and has a diploma in diesel mechanics, allegedly disclosed that in 2004 he went to Srinagar where he met some terrorists who brainwashed him into joining the "jihad" movement. At their instance, he went to Bangladesh via the West Bengal border and stayed there for three months. He underwent training in handling of explosives under the supervision of Harkat-ul-Jehad-e-Islami chief Mufti Abdul Hannan, presently lodged in a Bangladesh jail. Hannan also sent Abdullah on some missions in Bangladesh. During his stay in Bangladesh, Abdullah came in touch with LeT militants through whom he was contacted by the LeT chief of operations in India outside Jammu and Kashmir, Azam Cheema, who is based at Bahawalpur in Pakistan. At Cheema's instance, Abdullah went to Iran by air and then sneaked into Pakistan in June last... The police team recovered two AK-56 rifles, six magazines and 179 live cartridges, 10 hand-grenades, five kg of PETN explosive, three litres of nitric acid, one litre of glycerine, three kg of urea, a computer and a satellite phone from there...

The Indian Express, 10 May 2006

Varanasi blast 'brain' shot in J&K was UP madarsa teacher (Aman Sharma)

Baghpat (UP), May 9: At a sprawling madarsa in Tanda, in western UP's Baghpat, the students were waiting for their teacher, Mohammad Zubair, gone missing since April 4. Then news came this morning quoting police from the Valley that he was the Varanasi blast mastermind shot dead in north Kashmir's Handwara. "His students were waiting for him...He is married with six children...I cannot believe my son was a terrorist," said his father, Mohammad Yousuf, who runs the madarsa where Zubair taught for 15 years. The police claim he was a top Harkat-ul-Jehad-i-Islami leader who was the "main organiser" of the March 7 Varanasi blasts that killed 20 people. He was shot today in a joint operation by the J&K police's Special Operations Group, the Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force and troops of the Army's 4 Para. Police said two others who were along with Zubair managed to escape during the encounter. Handwara SSP Nitesh Kumar said the militant had been on the run for two weeks in the Valley. "Zubair tried to flee to Bangladesh but failed because of constant police pressure. So he came to Kashmir and was planning to cross over to Pakistan," said Kumar. The UP STF said that Zubair's name first cropped up in the Varanasi blasts probe following the arrest of Phoolpur's imam, Waliullah, on April 5...

Hindustan Times, 10 May 2006

59 terror camps active across LoC: Mukherjee (Press Trust of India)

Jammu, May 9, 2006: Stating that 59 terrorist training camps were operational across the Line of Control (LoC), Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Tuesday asked Pakistan to demolish the infrastructure of support for terrorists. Mukherjee also said the Al-Qaeda had 'always been a threat to India no matter where it was based'. Briefing the media at the airport after visiting Kulhand in Doda district and Basantgarh in Udhampur district where terrorists had killed 32 Hindus last week, he said that he would like to remind Pakistan that terrorists "are not the friends of anybody. Cross-border terrorism had no affiliation and terrorists are a menace for the world." Pakistan should not allow terrorists to use its territory, and their infrastructure should be demolished so that a message is sent out that terrorists have no support, he added. New Delhi has often accused Islamabad of failing to deliver on its January 2003 commitment that it would not allow terrorists to operate from its territories. Pakistan denies the Indian charge. Stating that he did not want to interfere in the internal affairs of Pakistan, Mukherjee said that no state should support terrorism as part of state policy. "If it does, it will have to pay the penalty," he said in reply to a question.

The Hindu, 11 May 2006

Three terrorists with arms arrested

Mumbai: At the end of three days of painstaking highway searches and a 150-km long daring chase, the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of the Maharashtra Police intercepted a car last night near Aurangabad and captured a huge cache of arms, ammunition and explosive besides arresting three terrorists. The seizure includes ten AK-47 assault rifles, 2,000 rounds of ammunition, 40 magazines, six magazine pouches and 30 kg of the dreaded RDX. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister R.R. Patil said at a press conference that the quantity of the RDX seized last night exceeded the amount used in the serial Mumbai bomb blasts in 1993... Arms, ammunition and explosive were neatly packed and concealed in server cabinets. The arrested persons, Mohammed Amer Shakeel Ahmad Shaikh, 30, Sayyad Zuber Sayyad Anwar, 26 and Mohammed Muzaffer Mohammad Tanvir, 24, were brought to Mumbai and produced before a magistrate. They were remanded to police custody till May 24. A visibly beaming Mr. Patil, who holds the Home portfolio, announced a special award of Rs. 5 lakh to the ATS and said that this is the fourth time the ATS had caught terrorists with weapons and explosive before they could mount an attack. He felicitated the ATS chief, A.P. Raghuvanshi and other officers "for very big success." The Deputy Chief Minister announced that two new ATS would be raised and based at Aurangabad and Nagpur in view of rising incidence of terrorism in

the State. The ATS was undermanned, he said, so more personnel would be posted to it and the squad would be provided with better arms and equipment.

The Hindu, 11 May 2006

Arrested militant underwent training in Bangladesh (Devesh K. Pandey)

New Delhi: Abdullah, the alleged Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant arrested along with his accomplice at Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station on Monday, had met about a dozen militants from Hyderabad who were also undergoing training in handling of arms and explosives in Bangladesh. During interrogation, Abdullah allegedly revealed that during his three-month stay there, he also met the then LeT chief in Bangladesh Ghulam Yazdani, and a Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami militant Ahsan Ullah Hasan, who were gunned down in an encounter with the Special Cell earlier this year. Abdullah and his accomplice, Mohammad Ali, told the police that the LeT militants were now being sent to Pakistan through "genuine" ways. They travel by air either to Iran or Afghanistan on genuine passports, after which they sneak into Pakistan where they join terrorist training camps run by the LeT and the Inter-Services Intelligence... Stating that Hamza had been planning a big strike perhaps in Delhi, a senior police officer said: "The seizure of arms and explosives from Hamza's hideout, coupled with the arrest of three militants, suspected to belong to LeT, at Aurangabad in Maharashtra and recovery of 30 kg of RDX and 10 AK-series assault rifles from them on Tuesday, has raised strong suspicions about the outfit planned to carry out a series of simultaneous strikes."...

Indian Express, 12 May 2006

Three held with RDX say it was meant for Gujarat (Mahesh Mhatre)

Mumbai, May 11: The three men arrested on Tuesday night near Aurangabad with 30 kg of RDX and 10 AK-47 rifles have told police officers grilling them that the explosives were meant for use in Gujarat, sources said today. The trio have also confessed that they are active members of the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), the sources said. "The LeT has been instigating them to take hit back following the recent riots in Gujarat," a senior officer told The Indian Express. The three... have also reportedly told their interrogators that the arms and explosives were to be stocked at Beed in Maharashtra and then transported to Gujarat. Maharashtra's Anti Terrorist Squad (ATS) officers on Thursday evening questioned Rafiq Shaikh, who had rented the Tata Sumo car, which the three had used to transport the arms and explosives. Officials said that the trio rented it on May 8... Roy also said: "As of now, we do not know where they got the consignment from. One of the arrested men left behind a cellphone in the Sumo. We are getting the printouts to check the conversation records." He added: "But there does not seem to be any connection between Tuesday's arrests, the recent arrests in Delhi and the earlier instances of LeT arrests in Mumbai."

Hindustan Times, 14 May 2006

Maharashtra, not Mumbai alone on terrorists' hit list: Patil (Press Trust of India)

Aurangabad, May 14: The recent seizure of arms and explosives from Ellora near Aurangabad and from Manmad in Nasik district proved that the whole state was on terrorists' hit list, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister RR Patil said on Sunday. "In the past, we believed that Mumbai, the economic capital of the country is on the hit list of terrorist. But, the last week's incidents proved that the whole state is on their list," Patil, who holds the Home portfolio, told reporters in Aurangabad. Patil was in Aurangabad to address a meeting of senior police officials from Marathwada region at police commissionerate in the wake of the seizure of arms. The Anti-Terrorist Squad of Mumbai police on Tuesday arrested three suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba militants and seized 10 AK-47 rifles, 2000 rounds 40 magazines and 30 kg RDX explosive from them near here while it seized two boxes containing RDX and an AK-47 rifle from Ankai fort at Manmad in Nasik district on Thursday. The Home minister reiterated that the state police would never allow the evil designs of the terrorists to succeed. He also lauded the joint operation by the ATS and Aurangabad police and added that a big tragedy was averted due to the operation. The minister said the quantity of explosives seized in Aurangabad and Nasik districts was far more than those used in 1993 Mumbai serial blasts. "It was not clear so far as to what was the target of the terrorists," Patil said. Patil also announced that ATS squads would be constituted in Aurangabad and Nagpur within two weeks.

The Hindu, 15 May 2006

ISI hand in Suryanarayana's killing: Taliban (B. Muralidhar Reddy)

Islamabad: Pakistan on Sunday rejected the claim made by a supposed Taliban commander that abducted Indian engineer, K. Suryanarayana, was killed at the behest of its intelligence agency, the ISI. "Such unsubstantiated claims by self-proclaimed commanders are not worthy of a reaction", Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson

Tasneem Aslam said. She was responding to questions on the reports by Afghan Tolu TV, which quoted a Taliban commander as saying Suryanarayana was killed at the instance of the ISI. "We have been condemning killing of civilians wherever they occurred as acts of terrorism. It is not the Government policy to sponsor killing of civilians," Ms. Aslam said. The spokesperson said the Government of Pakistan was not obliged to react to statements by any one...

The Hindu, 16 May 2006

Another massive arms haul in Maharashtra

Mumbai: The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of the Maharashtra police has made another big haul of arms, ammunition and explosives, this time at Malegaon in Nashik district, and nabbed five more persons but is still looking for Jameeruddin Ansari, the supposed kingpin of the terrorist module involved in providing the weapons to planners of big strikes. On Sunday night, the ATS sleuths picked up Shareef Mohammed Shabbir Ahmed, an activist of the banned organisation, the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), who had harboured the second car, an Indica, used by the gunrunners. The first, a Tata Sumo, was captured last Tuesday along with its cache. Earlier, the police had found the Indica abandoned near Malegaon and had picked up four activists of the SIMI. Their interrogation had led them to Dr. Shareef Ahmed who was contacted by the occupants of the Indica that they would like to leave the car under his care. The car contained weapons, which were later hidden in an electrical shop, and Dr. Ansari used the car for a couple of days. He then abandoned it. On Sunday night, the police raided the shop in Malegaon and the raid yielded six Ak-47 assault rifles, 1,000 rounds of ammunition, 13 kg of RDX and 10 magazines. The police had also seized the cell phone and diary of the doctor. Together with the earlier two massive hauls, the total seizure includes 16 Ak-47 rifles, 43 kg of RDX, 3,200 rounds for the rifles, 50 hand grenades and 80 magazines. The number of arrests has gone up to ten, all from Aurangabad and Malegaon.

The Hindu, 18 May 2006

ISI had a hand in killing of Suryanarayana: Pranab

New Delhi: Union Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Wednesday told Rajya Sabha that though Pakistan has denied it, there were "certain indications" that the Pakistani intelligence agency, ISI, had "some hand" in the killing of engineer Suryanarayana in Afghanistan. "We are trying to convey to Pakistan that terrorists are friends of nobody. I don't know if they are friends of themselves," he told Telugu Desam Party member C. Ramachandraiah. He was replying to a question on what was the Government's level of confidence in normalising relations with Pakistan in view of its alleged hand in the killing of Suryanarayana and driver Maniappan Kutty.

Indian Express, 18 May 2006

India's first joint fighting doctrine unveiled

New Delhi, May 17: After years of hurdles and meticulous research, the government today launched the long-awaited armed forces Joint Doctrine, a set of warfighting principles that involves all three services in equal measure for all possible future conflicts. After China, Pakistan turns to Greece to build its frigate fleet ICBM Agni-III ready for test-firing. No consensus yet on curbing rights violation in army. JJ offers army expertise to 'friends' in Latin America. Navy pushes for Israeli Barak on all warships. The Joint Doctrine will serve as an adjunct to the existing single-service doctrines exclusive to the three forces. Releasing the Doctrine today at the Unified Commanders Conference, Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee said, "In the prevalent operational environment, defence services are required to provide a full spectrum security as well as response. The warfare today encompassed spheres such as political, economic, social, diplomatic, and many more." Joint doctrinal war scenarios stretch from conventional warfare to low intensity conflicts of a protracted nature, from counter-insurgency to deterrent posturing. The Defence Minister added, "Wars have become costlier and there is a shift to asymmetric warfare. The response therefore towards such myriad challenges has to be integrated, flexible, innovative and in real time." Pulling up the example of the Andaman & Nicobar Command, which has come to be seen as an exemplifying team work of the three forces, Mukherjee called for setting tangible goals to ensure that the required pace of restructuring and transformation was maintained. The appointment of a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), by most accounts, would provide the necessary nodal power to imbue the Joint Doctrine with the real bite, though the proposal still awaits "political consensus". "There is a need to evolve a road map towards furthering the process of joint commands to make resources available for modernisation," he said. The Defence Ministry indicated that the document was intended to be dynamic and subject to regular review to keep pace with the evolving concepts and technology and ensure its contemporary relevance.

Daily Excelsior, 29 May 2006

Terrorism threat to both countries, says Duggal

ISLAMABAD, May 29: Ahead of the crucial Indo-Pak Home Secretary-level talks beginning here tomorrow to discuss contentious issues like terrorism, New Delhi has said it wants both countries to carry out a joint fight against the scourge. Home Secretary V K Duggal, who is in Pakistan for the talks, said terrorists have no religion and want to impose their will on the people. Observing that terrorism has emerged as a threat to both the countries, he told Geo TV that "India and Pakistan have to fight together to get rid of this menace." The Home Secretary-level talks being held under the aegis of the third round of Composite Dialogue process would provide an opportunity for officials of both the countries to have a frank discussions on issues like terrorism, drug trafficking and release of prisoners. During tomorrow's talks India is expected to discuss two aspects of terrorism - one that directly relates to cross border terrorism wherein trained militants continue to infiltrate through LoC into Jammu and Kashmir and secondly the reported attempts by banned Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) to diversify its activities into the Indian hinterland. The second point was recently highlighted by National Security Advisor M K Nayanaran, who said that a disturbing trend has been noticed that LeT is systematically trying to train, motivate and arm some Indian Muslim youth to carry out attacks in different Indian cities. Pakistan banned LeT in 2001 along with Jaish-e-Mohammad. However LeT founder, Hafeez Sayed floated another organisation called Jamat-ud Dawa, (JD) which was recently banned by the United States. Pakistan, however, declined to prescribe JD saying that it would do so only if United Nations Committee on Terrorism bans it. Yet another issue that was expected to come up during the talks was the extradition of fugitive Dawood Ibrahim, who India says is settled in Karachi. Dawood's name continue to figure prominently in the list of wanted men exchanged periodically between both the countries. The two sides would also discuss the issue of prisoners languishing in each other's jails. Despite periodic assurances and agreements both the countries continue to hold large number of prisoners who have completed their prison terms. Pakistani Home Secretary Syed Kamal Shah has said that over 400 Indian prisoners are languishing in Pakistani jails, where as Indian officials put the numbers around 650. This included 505 fishermen and 152 prisoners of other categories. Several hundred Pakistani prisoners continue to languish in Indian prisons. Ahead of the talks India has said it would release 59 Pakistani fishermen while Pakistan announced its plans to release 71 Indian fishermen through Wagah border tomorrow. As a goodwill gesture Pakistan has also released two children of Indian fishermen, who were flown from Karachi to Mumbai this week. The Secretaries would also discuss the menace of drug trafficking, specially in the backdrop of reports that opium crops have come back in big way in Afghanistan and along the Pak-Afghan border. (PTI)

The Hindu, 31 May 2006

European Union bans LTTE

NEW DELHI: The European Union Foreign Ministers on Monday ordered the listing of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) as a banned organisation. Western diplomats said on Tuesday that the decision was taken at a meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels. The diplomats told this correspondent that the E.U. decision would result in the freezing of LTTE assets in 25 countries across Europe and put an end to its efforts to raise funds for funding its terror campaign in Sri Lanka. Asked to comment on the E.U. decision, an Indian official said: "It's a strong, symbolic message to the Tigers." The Tigers would have to shut down their huge office in Paris, used by Lawrence Thilagar for propaganda activities. Fund-raising capacities of the LTTE would also be affected, the official said.

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Duggal, Shah discuss terrorism

ISLAMABAD, May 30: The two-day talks between Indian and Pakistani Home Secretaries began today with the main focus on ways to combat terrorism, drug smuggling and finalising a mechanism for quick release of civilian prisoners of both the countries. Home secretary V K Duggal and his Pakistani counterpart Syed Kamal Shah led their respective delegations at the talks, which coincided with the release of 71 Indian fishermen by Pakistan today as a "goodwill gesture". The talks were held against the backdrop of local media reports that the Indian delegation would utilise the opportunity to express its concerns about the presence of 60 Kashmiri militant training camps in the Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK). New Delhi has repeatedly linked rapid progress in the ongoing peace talks with abolition of alleged militant training camps in Pakistan, the existence of which Islamabad denies. India was likely to ask Pakistan about the steps taken to bring a complete halt to cross-border terrorism. However, both Pakistani and Indian officials remained "tight-lipped" as to what transpired during discussions on the first day of talks, which began with a delay of over three hours.