

The Hindu, 1 November 2005 2005

Manmohan talks tough (By Neena Vyas)

NEW DELHI: A telephone call on Monday from Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf provided an opportunity for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to tell him bluntly that New Delhi expected Islamabad to act against terrorism directed at India. There were "indications" of "external linkages" of terrorist groups behind the October 29 bombings in the capital, Dr. Singh said. The Prime Minister reportedly told Gen. Musharraf that the country was "outraged" at the acts of terrorism and violence against defenceless civilians. Terrorism could never be justified. Such acts could not and would not weaken India's resolve to fight terrorism or its commitment to the country's unity and territorial integrity. Political observers see Dr. Singh's curt reminder to Gen. Musharraf that his country had made a commitment to end cross-border terrorism and his reference to "indications" of "external linkages of terrorist groups" with the Delhi blasts as a diplomatic signal to Pakistan that India could not be expected to demonstrate endless patience and tolerance in the face of continued provocation.

The Hindu, 1 November 2005

Death for Pakistan national

NEW DELHI: Mohammed Arif alias Asfaq, a Pakistan national and member of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, was sentenced to death by a lower court here on Monday in the Red Fort attack case. Co-accused Nazir Ahmed Quasid and his son, Farooq Ahmed Quasid, both of Indian origin, were awarded rigorous life imprisonment. Three Army personnel were killed in the December 22, 2000 attack.

The Hindu, 1 November 2005

"Fear of more terrorist attacks in near future"

NEW DELHI: In recent years the threat of terrorist attacks has badly affected the lives of people around the world. So much so that people in various nations fear that they would become a target of a terrorist attack in the near future, while a large number of them do not feel safe now, particularly after the massive terrorists attacks in New York, London, Bali and Delhi. Even a large number of Indians feel unsafe in the changed global scenario and fear more terrorist attacks in the near future. However, compared to other nations, they believe that that there Government machinery is prepared to meet the challenges posed by terrorist organisations, reveals a recent study by a leading global market intelligence company, Synovate. "Globally, major initiatives to clamp down on terrorism have been taken. India's security forces have also brought down the number of terrorist incidents. The progress in the peace process with neighbours as well as belief in India's military strength has also increased confidence among Indians," says Alok Shanker, Managing Director of Synovate in India.

The Hindu, 1 November 2005

Government doubles compensation for blast victims to Rs.2 lakhs

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Government on Monday re-worked the compensation package for the victims of the serial bomb blasts that rocked the Capital on Saturday evening. It also decided to award Rs.2 lakhs each to the driver and conductor of the Delhi Transport Corporation bus who showed presence of mind and prevented a major tragedy by evacuating the passengers from the bus in the Govindpuri incident. Meanwhile, the Cabinet, which met under the leadership of Ms. Dikshit, announced that the driver and conductor who helped avert a major mishap would also get Rs. 2 lakhs each for their bravery. It also condemned the blasts as a dastardly and cowardly act leading to loss of several innocent lives. It conveyed its condolences to the bereaved families and observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

The Hindustan Times, 1 November 2005

PM to Pervez: Act on terror (By Nilova Roy Chaudhury)

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Monday minced no words when Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf called him to express his condolences over the deaths in the Delhi blasts. Short of directly accusing Pakistan, Singh said he was "disturbed" at indications of "external linkages" of terrorist groups with the blasts. The PM told Musharraf that India "was outraged at these heinous acts of terrorism". According to a statement, Singh told Musharraf, "India expects Pakistan to act against terrorism directed at India." "Violence against defenceless civilians can never be justified," the PM said. "Terrorism would never weaken India's resolve or our commitment to the country's unity and territorial integrity." During the 10-minute conversation, Singh reminded Musharraf of Pakistan's commitment to end cross-border terrorism against India, the PM's media advisor, Sanjaya Baru, said. Musharraf said "Pakistan fully condoles the Government of India" for the "dastardly terrorist attack".

The Indian Express, 1 November 2005

India links Pakistan to blasts (Reuters)

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told Pakistan on Monday that weekend bomb blasts in Delhi were probably linked to foreign elements, while Indian officials said Pakistan could have been involved. Pakistani officials responded by urging New Delhi to provide evidence of the involvement of Pakistani militant groups in the

blasts which killed 59 people, and promising to cooperate with the investigations. "The prime minister told the president of Pakistan that the country was outraged at these heinous acts of terrorism," the statement said. Although Singh did not name Pakistan, Indian foreign ministry officials said he was referring to anti-Indian militant groups based in Pakistan. "The president has said we are ready to cooperate in the investigations," spokeswoman Tasnim Aslam said. "But evidence has to be shared with us."

The Indian Express, 1 November 2005

Red Fort case: Death for one, lifer for two

NEW DELHI A Delhi court today handed out a death sentence to Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba militant Mohammad Arif, alias Ashfaq, for the December 2000 Red Fort attack. Bringing the curtains down on the case, Additional Sessions Judge O P Saini said: "...I direct that he (Ashfaq) shall be hanged by the neck till he is dead." Ashfaq was fined Rs 4.35 lakh under various sections of the Indian Penal Code for waging war against the Government of India. Two Rajputana Rifles jawans and a civilian were killed in the attack. Sentencing Ashfaq to death, the judge said: "This is a case where life imprisonment would be inadequate and ends of justice would be served only by awarding the death sentence." Terming the crime as the "rarest of rare", Justice Saini said: "...such dastardly acts are being committed with increased frequency these days, in which many people are being killed with impunity... This needs to be curbed with a heavy hand. Death sentence is one such deterrent measure".

The Indian Express 3 November 2005

Homeland Security wing planned

NEW DELHI, November 2: In the wake of the serial blasts that rocked the Capital, the Union Home Ministry is considering setting up a special "Homeland Security" wing to deal with internal security. The proposal has received the go-ahead from the internal and external security establishments. It has been proposed that the new set-up will work as the "brain" of the internal security set-up analysing intelligence, future trends, threats and security concerns, and suggest a security policy. It will not have an operational role but will deal exclusively with internal security policy. Besides security officials, the Homeland Security wing will work in close coordination with top Indian universities, with IIT, Kanpur likely to play the nodal role. Despite the plethora of security establishments in India, none is detailed to come up with future trends in and threats to internal security. Also there is a serious lack of coordination between agencies. Hence the ministry is often forced to take decisions on varied information supplied by internal security agencies.

The Hindustan Times 3 November 2005

Delhi blasts link traced to Muzaffarabad: Police (Press Trust of India)

New Delhi, November 2: Investigations into the serial blasts in Delhi indicated linkage of Muzaffarabad in PoK to the incident and Pakistan-based Lashker-e-Taiba (LeT) is a strong suspect irrespective of its denial, police sources said here today. At least four terrorists were involved in triggering the three blasts in the national capital in quick succession on October 29 that killed 59 people and injured 210. Immediately after the third blast at Govindpuri in South Delhi, a call was made from a mobile phone from the area at around 6.05 PM to another mobile phone in Srinagar, the sources told PTI here. The mobile phone, which received the call in Srinagar, was immediately used to make a call to Muzaffarabad in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, they said. Investigators believe that the call from Delhi was made by the terrorist to inform about accomplishment of the task of triggering blasts to his master in Srinagar who, in turn, conveyed the message to a bigger master based in Muzaffarabad. The sources said the phones used in Srinagar and Muzaffarabad are believed to belong to Let... These calls are believed to have been made to instruct the module in the capital to carry out the blasts, the sources said. Investigators believe that an elusive LeT commander based in India identified as Salar alias Hamid alias Afaq could be connected with the explosions...

The Hindustan Times 5 October 2005

Task force on global strategic developments formed (Indo-Asian News Service)

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has constituted a task force on global strategic developments that will examine various aspects of international trends in strategic affairs. The task force, under the chairmanship of former convenor of the National Security Advisory Board and strategic affairs analyst K Subrahmanyam, has been in the pipeline for the last six months. "Since the Prime Minister's return from the US, there was an imperative need to look at the strategic landscape in a holistic fashion, not just limited to India's bilateral initiatives but on all multilateral programmes," said an official at the Prime Minister's Office. "The task force mandate will be not just having a close look on nuclear issues but on other areas such as energy as well." The other members of the task force include P Rama Rao, former chairman, Atomic Energy Regulatory Board; RK Pachauri, director, Tata Energy & Resources Institute; Arvind Virmani, director, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations; Tarun Das, former director-general, Confederation of Indian Industry; Air Marshal (Retd) Vinod Patney; professor MS Ananth, director, Indian Institute of Technology-Madras; and Commodore Uday Bhaskar, deputy

director-general, Institute of Defence Studies & Analysis, who will also function as member-secretary of the task force. The newly constituted body will come under the National Security Council Secretariat and is expected to submit its report within six months.

The Daily excelsior 6 November 2005

Militant arrested in Amritsar (United News of India)

AMRITSAR: Punjab Police today claimed to have foiled an attempt to assassinate former Haryana Chief Minister Bhajan Lal with the arrest of a militant, Amarjit Singh, here. The militant was arrested under various sections of IPC and the Arms Act in the city late last night by Amritsar police, SSP RPS Brar said here. Police have also recovered arms and ammunition from the accused, who had been nabbed earlier as well in 2003 from Tarn Taran and was presently on bail...

The Hindustan Times 7 November 2005

Two Bhutanese Maoists held with arms in Siliguri (Press Trust of India)

Siliguri: Two Bhutanese, suspected members of the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) of Nepal, were arrested with arms from Narbong tea garden near Kurseong in West Bengal's Darjeeling district, a senior police official said on Saturday. Superintendent of Police Rajiv Mishra said the two identified as Kirod Monger (20) and Kanchan Rai (18) were caught by the garden workers following their suspicious movement and handed over to the police on Friday. Two sophisticated 7.35 mm foreign pistols were recovered from their possession. During interrogation Monger allegedly confessed that he had received arms training at Chisopani camp in Nepal run by MCC and left the camp with two fire arms on October 29 and reached Kurseong yesterday, the SP said. Police is investigating whether there was any MCC network in Darjeeling district, Misra said. Rai, however, claimed that he came to Kurseong from the Bhutanese Refugee camp in Nepal in search of a job. His claim of innocence was being examined, Mishra said.

The Hindu 8 November 2005

Police zeroing in on LeT network

NEW DELHI: On the basis of information gathered so far, the Delhi police are now concentrating on suspected terrorist outfits having bases in North India and East India. They are also questioning those who provided logistic support to different terrorist modules cracked by the police here in the past. According to sources, the police have been provided with certain inputs by intelligence agencies that indicate involvement of the modules, most of which are of the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), based in western Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and even in Bengal. A probe into links of these modules in the neighbouring countries of Bangladesh and Nepal is reportedly being carried out by the intelligence agencies. Some inputs are also emerging from Punjab. It is learnt that the police have been questioning those who in the past have helped terrorist modules in the Capital... While the police are busy gathering information to zero in on a particular network, it is learnt that Abdul Razzak, the LeT commander in Dubai, who was arrested by the Special Cell here about two months ago, is being interrogated by intelligence officials.

The Hindu 9 November 2005

Breakthrough in Delhi blasts probe (Praveen Swami)

NEW DELHI: Police and intelligence authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have made the first substantial breakthrough in investigations of the October 29 serial bombing of New Delhi, which claimed 63 lives. Ghulam Mohammad Mohiuddin, an alleged Hizb-ul-Mujahideen operative from the Banihal area of the district of Doda, was detained by troops of the 12 Rashtriya Rifles in a search operation on Sunday... According to Mohiuddin's preliminary questioning, carried out at the Joint Interrogation Centre in Jammu, he was assigned to the New Delhi operation by a Banihal area Hizb ul-Mujahideen commander, Abdul Hamid. Mohiuddin told his interrogators that his services were requisitioned by the Lashkar-e-Taiba, which said it needed someone familiar with the capital to aid an ongoing operation... On the morning of October 29, Mohiuddin was contacted at Awantipura Transport's office by three Lashkar operatives... According to Mohiuddin, the group scouted crowded markets in New Delhi in a hired auto-rickshaw before finally leaving an explosive device in the Paharganj market. Mohiuddin said he was then given Rs. 20,000 as a reward and told to hide out for several days. He therefore travelled to Jodhpur before returning home...

The Daily Excelsior 10 November 2005

Terrorists can't be freedom fighters: Manmohan

CHANDIGARH: In a veiled reference to Pakistan, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today said no country can pretend that cross border terrorism will not affect it internally and that our terrorist could be someone's "freedom fighter". "No Government can any longer pretend that what happens across the border is not going to hurt it

internally. No country can any longer pretend that someone's terrorist could be someone else's freedom fighter," Singh said delivering the P N Haksar memorial lecture here without naming Pakistan...

The Daily Excelsior 12 November 2005

PM for 'non-military' measures (Press Trust of India)

NEW DELHI: Striking a new note, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today said "non-military measures" were invariably needed to evolve durable solutions to internal conflict situations. To address our security challenges, options should not be limited to mere application of force, Singh said "whether it is a war in its classical sense, or in its many variations such as internal conflict, insurgent movements or even transnational terrorism, non military measures are invariably needed to evolve durable solutions". "Hence, Policy analysts must adopt interdisciplinary approaches and policy planners should develop sophisticated, multi-pronged responses", the Prime Minister said in his 40th anniversary address to the members of country's leading security think tank, Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA) here. He said such responses should be aimed at improving country's security in all dimensions; economic, social, political and even in terms of energy security. "Such an approach is even more important as military and police forces grapple with new and unconventional challenges" Singh told a distinguished audience of strategists, top services brass and members of the diplomatic corps.... "To advance our own security interests, we must engage in cooperative, constructive and mutually beneficial relationship with all major powers of the world" keeping in mind that "international relations are ultimately power relations, based on realpolitik and not on sentiment" he said.

The Hindu 12 November 2005

Alleged Jaish conduit arrested in Delhi

NEW DELHI: An alleged conduit of the terrorist outfit, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), who shuttled between India and Bangladesh and had ferried the terrorists involved in the Ayodhya attack this July, was arrested by the Special Cell of the Delhi police at Old Delhi railway station on Friday. With his arrest, the police hope to identify and trace the JeM militants he helped infiltrate into the country... During interrogation, he identified himself as Abdul Baqi, a resident of a village located near the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal. He allegedly disclosed that he had been working as a conduit for the JeM, which has its base in Dhaka, for the past three years... Baqi's most shocking revelation was that he had brought over a dozen JeM terrorists to Delhi, who were part of the plan hatched in Bangladesh to carry out a daring attack in Ayodhya. It took him over six trips to bring all the militants to the Capital.

The Hindu 13 November 2005

No question of demilitarisation unless terrorism ends: Manmohan (Amit Baruah)

DHAKA: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told his Pakistani counterpart Shaukat Aziz that there could be no demilitarisation or redeployment of forces unless there was an end to cross-border terrorism and infiltration. In a meeting on the sidelines of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit, Dr. Singh informed Mr. Aziz that India and Pakistan should not be deflected from taking the peace process forward by the terrorist attacks that continue to take place. Briefing presspersons on the discussions, Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said on Saturday that incidents like the terrorist attacks in New Delhi impacted on both public opinion in India and the Government... Mr. Saran also stated that eventual redeployment of forces should not be restricted to the Line of Control (LoC)...

The Indian Express 14 November 2005

Terror groups train PoK orphans for militancy: Report (Press Trust Of India)

LONDON: Pakistan-based terror outfits, exploiting human misery, are taking children orphaned by earthquake in PoK off the streets to train them to carry out militant activities in J-K, a Sunday Times report claimed today. The report was quoting Pakistan's leading human rights organisation, Ansar Burney Welfare Trust. The organisation said that Pakistan-based militant groups active in J-K were taking orphans off the streets and putting them in training camps. It claimed to have evidence that sympathetic government officials were passing children on to the jihadis to be looked after, according to the report... Jamaat-ud Dawa, a jihadi group in Pakistan, has called for orphans to be handed over for an "Islamic education"...

The Hindu 15 November 2005

'Militants had identified eight targets'

NEW DELHI: Tariq Ahmed Dar, the alleged Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) conduit arrested from Srinagar on charges of his involvement in the Delhi serial blasts, has purportedly disclosed that the four militants who triggered the explosions had planned to carry out more attacks in the Capital. Tariq allegedly told the interrogators that the militants had identified at least eight targets in the city, including crowded market places and the Metro rail. While

they triggered the blasts in Paharganj main bazaar, Sarojini Nagar market and inside a Delhi Transport Corporation bus at Govindpuri in South Delhi on October 29, they apparently went underground when the police turned on the heat. The police have learnt that Tariq was in direct contact with a top LeT leader based in Pakistan and was in regular touch with him through a satellite phone... According to the police, seven LeT men, including the Pakistani LeT commanders, Abu Al Kama and Abu Huzefa, were involved in the conspiracy behind the Delhi blasts.

The Hindustan Times 16 November 2005

Salem says ISI plotted 1993 Mumbai blasts (Rajnish Sharma and Archis Mohan)

New Delhi: The tough don is singing. And merrily. He has reportedly confessed to his role in the 1993 Mumbai blasts and, here's the best part according to his interrogators, detailed the extent of Pakistani involvement. CBI sources told the Hindustan Times that Salem had given them details - specific dates and locations - of the meetings between Dawood Ibrahim and Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) men... He has told the interrogators that Dawood was asked by the ISI - and not the other way around - to plan the bombings to avenge the demolition of the Babri Masjid in December 1992...

The Hindustan Times 18 November 2005

Terrorism will scare away investors in SAARC region: PM (Press Trust of India)

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Thursday warned that investors will fight shy of entering the SAARC countries if there is no assurance of peace and security and called for unitedly fighting terrorism that is haunting the region. "We have a collective stake in ensuring peace and security in the SAARC region because no investor will come to this region if there is no assurance of peace and security," the Prime Minister said while inaugurating first SAARC Business Leaders Conclave here. "To imagine that anyone of us can pursue what economists call 'beggar-thy-neighbour' policies and thereby prosper is to delude oneself," Singh said, adding the SAARC business community has vital stake in regional security and in victory in the war against terror. "We must join hands to put our collective house in order as peace in region will benefit all. Terrorism anywhere will hurt us all," he said... "No country in this region can be secure when others are insecure," he said, adding no country can insulate itself from consequences of poverty disease and terrorism in any other country.

The Indian Express 19 November 2005

'US must get Pakistan to dismantle terror network' (C Raja Mohan)

NEW DELHI: The third report of the 9/11 Public Discourse Project (PDP), released on November 14, criticised Pakistan for not having done enough to fight terrorists operating within its borders and asked the US government to pressure Pakistan to "act forcefully" to disrupt the activities of terrorists in that country. The PDP was formed after the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, also called the 9/11 Commission, headed by Thomas H Kean, released its report on July 22, 2004. The PDP's aim was to assess the progress of US government reforms since the publication of that report. Part III of the PDP's report is a grade sheet on how the Bush administration has responded to the 9/11 Commission's recommendations on steps the US was required to take in foreign policy, public diplomacy and non-proliferation to combat terrorist threats. The first report dealt with emergency preparedness, response and homeland security, while the second reviewed the government institutions responsible for intelligence and counterterrorism. The 9/11 Commission had recommended that the US government make maximum effort to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. The PDP, in its third report, says that "insufficient progress" has been made on this...

The Hindu 21 November 2005

Punjab police foil terror plan (United News of India)

JAGRAON: The Punjab Police on Sunday claimed to have foiled a major plan by Pakistan-trained terrorists of the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) to strike in crowded localities in the State and national capitals. Announcing the arrest of three BKI terrorists here, SSP R.K. Jaiswal said they planned to detonate bombs in areas dominated by a particular community. The three, who were arrested on Saturday on the outskirts of the town, were identified as Chamkaur Singh and Bhagwant Singh, both belonging to Payal, and Manpreet Singh, hailing from Dehlon. The police seized 1.2 kg RDX, one pencil bomb, 28 detonators, a timer, 55 AK-47 cartridges, 56 Mauser cartridges and four .9 mm cartridges. The ammunition and RDX were smuggled from Pakistan through the Rajasthan border. Mr. Jaiswal said the three had gone to Pakistan in May via Bangkok. In Pakistan, they met BKI chief Wadhwa Singh, who imparted training to them in assembling and detonating explosives and also gave them money. They were in touch with the U.S.-based BKI militant, Harjit Singh Latara. "The nature of instructions they got from Latara are yet to be analysed," he added.

The Hindu 21 November 2005

'Threatening letter' from Al-Qaeda (Press Trust of India)

GHAZIABAD: An alert has been sounded in Meerut after police received a letter, purportedly from the Al-Qaeda, threatening a series of blasts in trains and major railway stations in western Uttar Pradesh. Security had been tightened and a general alert sounded, especially on trains and in railway stations in Meerut, Bareilly, Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur and Ghaziabad, after "the receipt of a letter" claimed to be written by the Al-Qaeda, Inspector-General of Police N.B. Singh said here on Sunday. "The letter might be a fake one but the police cannot ignore it," he said. He said the letter was received by the Muzaffarnagar police two days ago. It was immediately brought to the notice of State Home Secretary Alok Sinha who directed senior police officials to ensure security in trains and railway stations.

The Hindustan Times 23 November 2005

Afghan Taliban say they killed Indian hostage (Agence France-Presse)

KANDAHAR: A purported spokesman for Afghanistan's ousted Taliban regime said the group killed Tuesday an Indian road worker they kidnapped at the weekend, but authorities could not confirm the claim. MR Kutty has been killed as there had been no response to a 48-hour deadline issued by the Taliban for the road construction company he worked for to leave Afghanistan, purported spokesman Yousuf Ahmadi said...

The Hindustan Times 23 November 2005

Akshardham could be the next target (Sobhana K)

New Delhi: Delhi's Akshardham temple could be the next target for a fidayeen attack. This is what the Delhi Police's elite Special Cell team has understood from the intercepts of Saifullah, the 26-year-old Jaish commander of Bandipore district who was killed in an encounter by a joint team of Delhi and J&K police. The target could also be a busy marketplace. The terrorists could be planning an attack similar to the one carried out in Gujarat... In the intercepts recorded by them, Saifullah was heard finalising the details of a strike with his counterparts across the border. "The group was planning to smuggle in AK-47, AK-56, grenades and other ammunition to the Capital," said a senior police officer. The basic plan was to carry out indiscriminate firing at an over-crowded marketplace to get maximum casualty...

The Hindu 27 November 2005

Suspected ISI agent shot dead in Ahmedabad

AHMEDABAD: In a joint operation, the Rajasthan and Gujarat police shot dead here on Saturday a resident of Madhya Pradesh, who was believed to be an ISI agent and connected with the Lashkar-e-Taiba... The ATS chief said the police had intelligence information that Shorabuddin (36), acting on behalf of Dawood Ibrahim and Sharif Khan Pathan, had come to Gujarat to kill an "important leader" and create chaos in the State... He was wanted by the Rajasthan police in connection with the murder of Hamid Lala in Udaipur on December 31, 2004. Two others, Ajam and Praful alias Tulsi, were arrested earlier... The police then recovered 24 AK-56 rifles and a large quantity of hand grenades from his firm at his Jharaniya village in Madhya Pradesh.

The Hindustan Times 30 November 2005

W Bengal Govt sounds alert due to Bangla blasts (Press Trust of India)

KOLKATA: The West Bengal government sounded an alert in the metropolis and along the Indo-Bangla border following the twin blasts in Bangladesh that killed nine people and injured 50 others on Tuesday. "The police have been alerted in the border districts and in Kolkata. Besides, strong vigil is being kept in sensitive and crowded areas. Vigil is also being maintained on the Metro Railway and important places in the city," Home Secretary Prasad Roy said...