

The Hindu, 10 October 2004

U.N. Council passes anti-terror resolution (Warren Hoge)

UNITED NATIONS, OCT. 9. The Security Council unanimously passed a Russian-initiated anti-terror resolution on Friday that declared all acts of violence against civilians unjustifiable by any political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic or religious considerations. The heavily reworked resolution, introduced last month in the aftermath of suicide bombings of two Russian airliners and the hostage crisis in a North Ossetia school in which more than 320 children and adults died, failed to achieve its original purpose of creating a global blacklist of terror suspects. A Security Council committee currently compiles a list restricted to people and groups linked to al-Qaeda and the deposed Taliban in Afghanistan whose assets, weapons purchases and travel member-states are supposed to block.

In broad terms, the resolution urged the 191 member-states of the U.N. to begin a campaign against terror.

The Hindu, 11 October 2004

17 killed as Rumsfeld visits Iraq (Atul Aneja)

MANAMA, OCT. 10. At least 17 persons were killed in two separate bomb attacks in Baghdad as the U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, arrived there today to see for himself the prospects of holding elections in January. A suicide bombing near the Oil Ministry, close to a police academy left several persons dead including many civilians. The explosion left a big crater near the Ministry building, a frequent target for militants. An official spokesman for the Iraqi interim Government in Baghdad said the bomb might have exploded early, leading to large civilian casualties. The Associated Press quoted a policeman as saying that the victims included police recruits. Several people were wounded in a separate attack by a suicide bomber near the Ministry of Culture. As explosions rocked parts of Baghdad, Mr. Rumsfeld began his first visit to the restive Anbar province.

The Hindu, 11 October 2004

Big jump in anti-terror cooperation: Russia (Vladimir Radyuhin)

MOSCOW, OCT. 10. Russia welcomed the unanimous adoption of a U.N. Security Council resolution on terrorism it had proposed as a quantum jump in global anti-terror cooperation. A statement issued here on behalf of the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, says the resolution adopted on October 8 "elevates international counter-terrorism cooperation under the U.N. auspices to a qualitatively new level." Moscow had introduced the resolution in the wake of a series of terrorist attacks in Russia that included the suicide hijacking of two planes and the hostage-taking at a school in Beslan that killed more than 340 persons. The Russian Foreign Minister drew attention to the provision in the resolution that calls on States to deny safe haven and bring to justice anyone participating in the financing, planning, preparation or commission of terrorism of acts. The Russian proposal to draw up an enlarged list of terrorists, not necessarily linked to the Al-Qaeda or the Taliban, was blocked by Pakistan, but the Russian envoy to the U.N. said Moscow would press for such a list in a working group to be set up under the new resolution. The Russian Foreign Minister also noted with satisfaction that the resolution calls for expediting adoption by consensus of the India-drafted conventions on international terrorism and the Russian-proposed pact on suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism.

Newindpress.com, 11 October 2004

Web video shows last appeal of beheaded UK hostage

DUBAI: A video tape posted on the Internet on Sunday showed British hostage Kenneth Bigley making a final appeal to the British government to meet his captors' demands before he was beheaded by a militant group in Iraq. "Here I am again Mr (Tony) Blair and your government, very, very close to the end of my life. You don't appear to have done anything to help me. I'm not a difficult person. I am a simple man who just wants to live a simple life with his family," the 62-year-old engineer said before masked men beheaded him. "These people, their patience is wearing very, very thin and they are very serious people. Please, please give them what they require, the freedom of the women in Abu Ghraib prison. If you do this the problem is solved," said Bigley, who was sitting on the floor with militants standing behind him. Insurgent sources in Iraq had said the Briton escaped briefly from his captors shortly before they killed him in a town southwest of Baghdad on Thursday. He was kidnapped on Sept. 16 along with two Americans who were beheaded soon after the abductions by the Tawhid and Jihad group led by al Qaeda ally Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, which demanded the release of women prisoners from U.S. jails in Iraq. Washington says it holds only two women in Iraq, both top weapons scientists from the days of Saddam Hussein. The British say they are not holding any women.

The Hindu, 14 October 2004

Mehdi Army makes a killing over arms surrender (Atul Aneja)

MANAMA, OCT. 13. Loyalists of Moqtada Al-Sadr have been handing over their heavy weapons for the third consecutive day, but the move is unlikely to weaken the radical Shia cleric who has twice led an uprising against the American occupation forces in Iraq. Under the deal worked out with the Americans, Mr. Al-Sadr's Mehdi Army in Baghdad's sprawling Shia slum, Sadr city, is not going to disband. It is handing over its heavy weapons, but is retaining light arms. In return, the Mehdi Army militiamen are receiving cash. Analysts point out that with the cash available, the fighters can rearm, as Iraq is flush with weapons that can be easily purchased. While Mr. Al-Sadr has only made a verbal commitment to surrendering heavy arms, he has already made progress in achieving some of his longstanding goals.

The Hindu, 14 October 2004

Hand over Zarqawi or face action, says Allawi (P. S. Suryanarayana)

BAGHDAD, OCT. 13. Iraq's interim Prime Minister, Iyad Allawi, on Wednesday threatened military action against the main militant stronghold of Fallujah if residents don't hand over the Jordanian terror mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Fallujah, in Iraq's Sunni Muslim heartland, is believed to be a stronghold of Al-Zarqawi's feared Tawhid and Jihad group, which has

kidnapped and beheaded numerous foreigners. Also on Wednesday, U.S. troops swept into the Sunni stronghold of Ramadi and joined Iraqi police and National Guardsmen in raids in Baqouba after a day of fierce clashes in militant enclaves. In Ramadi, U.S. troops sealed off streets and searched buildings after days of clashes. — AP

The Hindu, 16 October 2004

India to take up militant camp issue with Bangladesh

MANESAR (HARYANA), OCT. 15. The Union Home Minister, Shivraj Patil, today said the Government would "privately" take up the issue of militant camps in Bangladesh during the next summit of the South Asian Association of Regional Co-operation (SAARC). Talking to mediapersons here after inaugurating an anti-hijacking training centre of the National Security Guards, he expressed concern over the presence of militant camps in Bangladesh. He said countries across the globe, including Pakistan and Bangladesh, were now realising that terrorism was a double-edged sword.

The Hindu, 16 October 2004

NSG launches anti-hijacking training (Lalit K. Jha)

MANESAR (HARYANA), OCT. 15. With aeroplanes being increasingly used for terrorist activities in recent years across the globe, the Union Home Minister, Shivraj Patil, today said there was a paramount need for aircraft intervention by security forces in the event of a hijack. The Home Minister appreciated "constant efforts" being made by the NSG to keep pace with the changing pattern of terrorist threats. Referring to the successful deployment of sky marshals by NSG to prevent any hijacking by terrorists here, Mr. Patil said of late terrorists have used it as a weapon of terror. Giving details of the new anti-hijacking training at its sprawling campus here, the NSG Director-General, R. S. Mooshahary, said instead of leasing an old aircraft, the force conceived, designed and built this realistic model which was much a more durable and manageable structure. Referring to the National Bomb Data Centre here, which is one of the six such centres in the world, Mr. Patil said it carries out studies of explosives and tries to find means and methods to reduce their impact. Mr. Patil said the NSG decision to induct women commandos would make this elite force more gender representative.

New Indian Express, 17 October 2004

Rocket hits luxury hotel in Iraq

BAGHDAD: A rocket on Saturday hit a luxury hotel that houses foreign contractors and diplomats in the Iraqi capital. The rocket landed in the parking lot of the Al Mansour Hotel, a five star hotel on the west bank of the Tigris River, smashing window panes. There were no immediate reports of casualties, Xinhua reports. The attack followed a series of successive explosions that damaged five churches across this capital city. Saturday is the second day of Ramadan, or Muslim holy fasting month. US and Iraqi authorities fear insurgents could launch massive assaults during this period.

Daily Times, 17 October 2004

2 US soldiers, 5 Afghans killed in Afghanistan

KABUL: Seven people including two US soldiers were killed in two separate incidents in Afghanistan in the past two days. In the first incident, two US soldiers were killed and three were wounded by a roadside bomb while on patrol in the southern Afghan province of Uruzgan, a US military spokesman said on Saturday. They were the first US soldiers to die in Afghanistan since last week's historic presidential election and brought the number of US military personnel killed since an operation to drive out the Taliban and Al Qaeda was launched three years ago to 102. Meanwhile, five people including a policeman were killed after a remote-controlled bomb exploded in eastern Afghanistan late on Friday near a truck supplying food to US bases, an official said.

Daily Times, 17 October 2004

Iraq militants hit churches, kill four US troops

BAGHDAD: Explosions damaged churches in Baghdad on Saturday and the US military reported the deaths of four more American troops in bomb attacks elsewhere in Iraq. A suicide car bomber killed three US troops, along with an Iraqi civilian, in Qaim near the Syrian border on Friday. Five churches were hit in a string of bomb attacks before dawn that seemed designed to intimidate the country's small but deep-rooted Christian community, already shaken by a deadlier series of bombings of churches that killed 11 people in August. The US military has accused Zarqawi of carrying out bombings aimed at fuelling sectarian strife and civil war. Zarqawi's Tawhid and Jihad group claimed responsibility for Thursday's suicide bombings that killed up to four Americans in the heart of Baghdad's fortified Green Zone.

Dawn, 17 October 2004

Zarqawi threatens to disrupt fuel import

BAGHDAD, Oct 16: Jordanian militant Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi has threatened to attack foreign trucks carrying imports of refined oil products into Iraq, an Iraqi Oil Ministry official said on Saturday. A pamphlet the official said was from Zarqawi's Tawhid and Jihad group said non-Iraqi trucks, which carry the bulk of Iraq's imports of refined products, would be attacked. The pamphlet was distributed to oil officials in the north, including the city of Mosul, and to traders who import refined products, such as petrol and diesel, the official added. Iraq, which has one of the largest oil reserves in the world, imports around \$2 billion worth of refined products a year. -Reuters

The Hindu, 19 October 2004

Merger sets stage for major clash in Iraq (Atul Aneja)

MANAMA, OCT. 18. A key Islamist militant group accused of operating from Fallujah has announced its merger with the Al-Qaeda, setting the stage for a major confrontation with American occupation forces in the embattled Iraqi city. The Tawhid Wal Jihad group, led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, announced its allegiance to the Al-Qaeda on Sunday, on a web site used by several Islamist groups. The statement added that the two were in touch eight months back, and "viewpoints were exchanged" before the dialogue was interrupted. Al-Jazeera television quoted a specialist in monitoring Islamist web sites as saying that the statement appeared authentic. Analysts say the merger shows that the U.S. invasion has resulted in Iraq, which had no previous history of religious extremism, becoming another Al-Qaeda hub. An Iraqi negotiator announced this morning that talks to defuse the crisis in Fallujah had broken down. The late night explosion happened near the Australian embassy.

Dawn, 19 October 2004

Afghan blast kills five

KABUL, Oct 18: A blast killed five people travelling in an election commission vehicle in southern Afghanistan on Monday, a UN spokesman said. The blast occurred southwest of Sharan, the provincial capital of Paktika province.-Reuters

The Hindu, 20 October 2004

'Islamists behind envoy attack' (Haroon Habib)

DHAKA: The British detective agency Scotland Yard suspects the involvement of Islamist extremist groups in the grenade attack on the British High Commissioner, Anwar Choudhury, at Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine in Sylhet in which the envoy was injured and three others, including his bodyguard, were killed. In a report submitted to the Bangladesh Crime Investigation Department on Monday, the Scotland Yard said the grenade used in the attack was of the same model as those used in the deadly attack on the Opposition Awami League rally in Dhaka on August 21.

The Hindu, 22 October 2004

Ultras blow up railway station in Jharkhand

RANCHI, OCT. 21. The Maoists Communist Centre of India-People's War on Wednesday night blew up the Latehar railway station under Garwah district of Jharkhand. After their merger, the two underground outfits - in a show of strength - have carried out a series of attacks in different parts of the State. Official sources said around 150 activists of the group took control of the railway station at 1p.m. They ordered the railway employees on duty out. The Station Master was removed along with three other employees at gunpoint. Later, they blew up the station using powerful explosives. The entire complex has been reduced to rubble.

New Indian Express, 27 October 2004

'Possible al Qaeda funds were routed through banks in Kerala'

KOCHI: It was the American intelligence agencies probing into the 9/11 terrorist attacks that first intercepted the rampant misuse of Indian banking channels for transferring huge chunks of money from one country to another. Top sources told this website's newspaper that the US investigators had zeroed in on a transaction amounting about Rs 600 crore that had been sent to the New York branch of the State Bank of India from the UAE in violation of laid down guidelines. Though there was no conclusive evidence to prove that this amount had reached the al Qaeda network, US agencies strongly believe that this amount was part of the terror funding funnelled into America by Laden men. The Reserve Bank of India, sources said, has already completed its investigation into the role played by banks in Kerala. The RBI, meanwhile, has introduced an elaborate 'know your customer' format with a view to preventing any more goof-up.

The Himalayan Times, 27 October 2004

India for joint bid with neighbours against rebels

New Delhi, October 26: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today mooted "joint or coordinated action on the ground" with India's neighbours to crack down on anti-India rebels sheltering in nearby countries. Addressing a conference here of the country's top military commanders, he said there would be no compromise on defence issues as India pursues the path of diplomacy to usher in peace in the neighbourhood. Anti-India rebels currently operate from bases in Bangladesh and Myanmar and New Delhi has asked both these countries to crack down on the rebels. Last year, Bhutan had launched a military offensive against anti-India rebels that forced many of them to flee to Bangladesh. He said India's first priority should be to devote itself to building a structure of cooperative and mutually beneficial relations with neighbours.

The Hindu, 30 October 2004

Terrorism, nukes factored in new war doctrine

NEWDELHI: The Army on Friday unveiled its war organisation and structural changes to incorporate new facets such as terrorism, nuclear threat and IT-powered warfare. One part of the doctrine is based on the premise that wars will be brief and intensely fought and there could be an element of terrorism in them, the Chief of Army Staff, N.C. Vij, told newsmen after emerging from the Army Commanders' Conference that ended on Friday.

The Assam Tribune, 30 October 2004

Home Ministry panel to discuss NE security

GUWAHATI, Oct 29 - A crucial meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Home Affairs will be held in New Delhi on November 5 to discuss important issues like the security scenario in the north-eastern region, situation in Jammu and Kashmir and the Naxal-affected States. Talking to newsmen here today, Member of Parliament Sarbananda Sonowal, said

that taking the opportunity of the meeting at this crucial juncture, he would try to raise the issues of talks with the militant groups for political solution of the problem of insurgency in the meeting.