

[Army fears drive to recruit Gorkha soldiers may be hit](#)

Asian Age, 5 May 2009

May 4: The Indian Army is apprehensive that Pushpa Kamal Dahal's resignation as Nepal PM could affect the drive to recruit Nepalese Gorkhas for the Indian Army and also lead to harassment of serving Nepalese Gorkhas when they return home on leave. "The resignation of Prachanda may make the Maoists more restive and hostile to India. This could lead to fresh roadblocks from the Maoists on recruitment of Nepalese Gorkhas and also harassment of the already enlisted Gorkha soldiers when they return home to Nepal on leave," Army sources said. The Indian Army fears the Maoists may try to mobilise public opinion afresh against signing up of Nepalese Gorkhas

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/news/top-story/army-fears-drive-to-recruit-gorkha-soldiers-may-be-hit.aspx>

[Editorial:Neighbourhood in turmoil](#)

Indian Express, 5 May 2009

One of the recurring dilemmas statesmen face is to decide what is urgent and what is important. From Kabul to Colombo, Karachi to Kathmandu, a stable India is surrounded with unprecedented diplomatic chaos. This too at a time when India is in the midst of the largest electoral exercise in history. Around the 20th of May, a new government will be sworn in New Delhi. Its first foreign policy priority must be to concentrate on our neighbours. Pugnacious diplomacy will not do, neither will a laid back approach. Our policy should be nuanced. Rightly or wrongly our neighbours accuse India of hegemonic ambitions. Raising the India bogey comes with fatal ease. Yet there is a grain of truth in their anxieties. This is the fate of all large countries which have less powerful and insecure neighbours.

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/neighbourhood-in-turmoil/454513/>

[Obama's tax plan weighs on Indian IT vendors](#)

Business Line, 6 May 2009

New Delhi/Bangalore, May 5 The changes being proposed by the US to its tax code could eventually lead to a squeeze on the margins of Indian IT service providers, as also force some American tech firms to move jobs back to the US from captives here. It will also have implications for non-IT American firms operating in India. The US President, Mr Barack Obama, had promised during his election campaign to put curbs on outsourcing so that jobs in America could be protected.

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2009/05/06/stories/2009050651890100.htm>

[We will secure equal status for Sri Lankan Tamils: Sonia](#)

Hindu, 10 May 2009

Chennai (IANS) Expressing anguish over the plight of the Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi said here on Sunday that the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) would work to secure equal status and equal rights for them. "Our ultimate goal is to secure for Tamil people (in Sri Lanka) equal status and equal rights," Ms. Gandhi said at an election rally where Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK chief M. Karunanidhi was also present.

<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/000200905101781.htm>

[No question of sending our Army to Lanka: PM](#)

Asian Age, 10 May 2009

May 9: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said here on Saturday that his government had done "all that it could" to help the Tamils of Sri Lanka and that it was in touch with the government in Colombo "on a daily basis" to bring about a political settlement "within the framework of a united and federal Sri Lanka." In saying so, he clearly distanced himself from his DMK ally whose leader, Tamil Nadu chief minister M. Karunanidhi, had recently supported the creation of a separate Eelam state for Sri Lanka's Tamils, if only to match arch-rival Jayalalithaa's pro-Eelam line

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/news/top-story/no-question-of-sending-our-army-to-lanka-pm.aspx>

[India kept in the loop on AfPak: Holbrooke](#)

Hindu, 13 May 2009

May 12: Describing India as a "great regional power", a senior official of the Obama administration told the US Congress on Tuesday that New Delhi is being kept "fully informed" on all policies of the American government on Pakistan and Afghanistan. Richard Holbrooke, special US representative for Pakistan and Afghanistan, however, refrained from making much comment on India's role and US government expectations from New Delhi in this regard. Mr Holbrooke had recently visited the region, including India

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/news/top-story/india-kept-in-the-loop-on-afpak-holbrooke.aspx>

[No transit rights to India under Pak-Afghan agreement](#)

Hindu, 14 May 2009

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan on Thursday said that no transit rights have been granted to India under an MoU Islamabad has signed with Kabul for concluding a trade pact and the agreement was strictly a bilateral matter with Afghanistan. Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit said the MoU signed between Pakistan and Afghanistan in Washington envisages the finalisation of a transit trade agreement between the two countries by the end of the year.

<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/001200905142011.htm>

[Left is out but UPA foreign policy may not swing right](#)

Hindu, 17 May 2009

Left is out but UPA foreign policy may not swing right

New Delhi: The support of the Left parties for four out of the five years of the United Progressive

Alliance government may have been a constraint on the foreign policy of Prime Minister

Manmohan Singh but the impressive victory registered by the Congress in the 2009 election will

not necessarily lead to major realignments on the external front. For, if the Indian

political terrain

has shifted decisively against the Left, the world too is not what it was when the Communist

parties withdrew their support from the UPA last August over the India-U.S. nuclear deal. The

victory of Barack Obama in the United States, the onset of the severest global financial crisis

since the Great Depression and the implosion in Pakistan have made the international environment

much more complicated. Even if there has been no fundamental change in the hegemonic

impulses driving big power politics in Asia and the world, the certitudes and equations of the Bush

era do not obtain in the same neat manner as before

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/17/stories/2009051755810800.htm>

[Protect India from the debris of LTTE defeat](#)

Asian Age, 20 May 2009

By Shankar Roychowdhury

One of their primary targets is likely to be Tamil Nadu, the place that is closest to Sri Lanka and one with which they are most familiar. Like the cry for "azadi" in the Kashmir Valley, a significant body of sentiment in Tamil Nadu - including some of its top political icons, resonates with the ideology of Eelam, and the state has long been perceived as a region of strategic depth for the LTTE. Preventive patrols of the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard have been deployed in the Palk Straits as part of "Operation Tasha", and a number of LTTE gun-runners and smugglers have been intercepted. This vigil will have to be further strengthened. A fairly extensive network of LTTE supporters and local proxy agents has also been developed in Tamil Nadu, which is believed to have established working relationships with other terrorist groups in this country, from peninsular India to the Northeast

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/opinion/opinion/protect-india-from-the-debris-of-ltte-defeat-.aspx>

[The march of folly: Obama's four-word AfPak strategy](#)

Asian Age, 20 May 2009

By Brahma Chellaney

May 20 : Now that the national election is over, Indian diplomacy will face demands to aid US President Barack Obama's strategy on Afghanistan-Pakistan (AfPak). To win greater Pakistani military cooperation on the Afghan frontier, Mr Obama is seeking New Delhi's assistance on at least two fronts — border-troop reductions and a resumption of "peace" talks with Islamabad. India can assist to the extent

that its own interests are safe. India has no offensively-configured troop formations along the Pakistan border, and any cut in border deployments must not provide the Pakistani military an opening to infiltrate more armed terrorists into India. New Delhi has no quarrel with Pakistan's fledgling civilian government, but a renewed bilateral dialogue can be meaningful only if Islamabad goes beyond cosmetic measures against its military-nurtured, India-directed Punjabi terror groups, like the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammad

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/opinion/op-ed/the-march-of-foolly-obama's-four-word-afpak-strategy.aspx>

[What now in India?](#)

Daily Star, 20 May 2009

By Harun ur Rashid

POLLING results indicate that Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh will become only the second Indian leader to win re-election after serving a full five-year term. Even though the election was fought primarily on domestic issues, the result has enormous implications for our region. India's new-found foreign policy direction is built on the back of a booming economy. GDP more than tripled since 1998. Despite global woes, India will grow at an impressive 6% to 7% this year.

<http://thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=88941>

[Indian envoys in Colombo; Talks will centre on 2.75-lakh displaced civilians](#)

Hindu, 21 May 2009

COLOMBO: National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan and Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar

Menon arrived here on Wednesday for discussions with Sri Lankan authorities on issues related to

the welfare of 2.75 lakh displaced civilians and a political solution to the ethnic conflict in the

island nation. The visit coincided with the silencing of guns by the Sri Lankan forces firing into the

sea in Mullaithivu district to mark the formal end of Eelam War IV. The two envoys are likely to

meet President Mahinda Rajapaksa over breakfast on Thursday and exchange views on the

humanitarian crisis triggered by the just-concluded war that led to the decimation of the LTTE as a

conventional military force and the death of its entire top brass

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/21/stories/2009052156990100.htm>

[26/11: More data provided to Pakistan](#)
Hindu, 21 May 2009

NEW DELHI: India on Wednesday handed over additional information to Pakistan on the

involvement of its citizens in the Mumbai terror attacks. The External Affairs Ministry handed over

to a diplomat of the Pakistan High Commission the details sought by Islamabad, official sources

confirmed. The information consisted of the confessional statement of the lone surviving gunman,

Ajmal Amir 'Kasab' and DNA samples of all the terrorists. Pakistan had complained that one of

the DNA samples was a duplicate. India acknowledged the "clerical error" and sent fresh samples.

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/21/stories/2009052157350100.htm>

[India's role still vital in Lanka](#)
Asian Age, 22 May 2009

May.22 : After comprehensively defeating the LTTE on the military battlefield, which few believed possible, Sri Lanka President Mahinda Rajapakse faces a test that only falls to the lot of statesmen, not mere politicians. Mr Rajapakse will now be called upon to address sensitive nation-building issues in the island country whose neglect had led to the birth of the LTTE some three decades ago. Settling the Tamil question in a way that is seen as fair by all concerned brooks no delay. Resting on its military laurels, and indefinitely deferring consideration of the key issues for reasons of domestic political expediency, will bring the Sri Lankan state no credit.

Questions are already being raised in the international community on the manner of the conduct of the last phase of the anti-LTTE war. Serious charges of the violation of human rights of civilians trapped in the conflict area, the muzzling of domestic dissent on issues relating to the anti-LTTE campaign, and the absence of access to the media and to aid agencies to the war zone, have led to questions being asked. The situation can be redressed, however, if the country's Tamil community — well over 200,000 of whom are now internally displaced persons — is speedily offered succour, helped to re-settle in its traditional home, and given realistic hope that its basic demands of an equal citizenship with the Sinhala

majority will soon be made a reality

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/opinion/editorial/india's-role-still-vital-in->

[Alternative route bid abandoned](#)
Daily Star, 22 May 2009

Abandoning the country's previously proposed routes, the government decided to connect Bangladesh to the Asian Highway Network (AHN) accepting routes proposed by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-Escap). "We decided to connect Bangladesh to the Asian Highway Network for the welfare of the country," Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain told reporters after a meeting at Bangladesh Secretariat

<http://thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=89304>

[Pak ready to phase out nuclear arms, if India does the same](#)
Times of India, 23 May 2009

WASHINGTON: Stating that Pakistan's nuclear weapon is a "deterrent" against India, the country's top diplomat to the US on Friday expressed willingness to enter into an agreement with New Delhi to phase out all atomic arms possessed by the two countries. Appearing on the CNN to make a public appeal to the Americans to donate USD five each through cell phone for the refugees of Swat Valley, Pakistan Ambassador to the US Hussein Haqqani insisted that the nuclear weapons of his country are safe and there should be no concern about their security

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Pak-ready-to-phase-out-nukes-if-India-does-the-ame/articleshow/4568227.cms>

[Krishna gets External Affairs, Railways for Mamata](#)
Hindu, 24 May 2009

NEW DELHI: Putting together his government literally brick by brick, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh apportioned work to six of his Cabinet colleagues on Saturday. Finance has been assigned to Pranab Mukherjee; Agriculture, Food & Civil Supplies, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution to Sharad Pawar; Defence to A.K. Antony; Home to P. Chidambaram, Railways to Mamata Banerjee and External Affairs to S.M. Krishna. This mini portfolio-allocation exercise was announced in the afternoon, less than 24 hours after Dr. Singh took the oath of office and secrecy along with 19 Cabinet colleagues. Primarily, portfolios over which there is no contention have been allocated in the first round

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/24/stories/2009052457770100.htm>

[China bigger threat than Pakistan, says IAF chief](#)

Times of India, 24 May 2009

NEW DELHI: India faces a greater threat from China than Pakistan because New Delhi knows little about Beijing's combat capabilities, India's air force chief told a newspaper in an interview published on Sunday. The world's two most populous nations fought a brief but brutal war over their 3,500 km (2,200 mile) Himalayan border in 1962, and both sides claim the other is occupying big but largely uninhabited chunks of their territory. India has also been pursuing closer relations with the United States

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/China-bigger-threat-than-Pakistan-IAF-chief/articleshow/4571491.cms>

Jaffna gets back to business

Asian Age, 24 May 2009

May 23: If Brigadier Ruwan Kulatunga has his way, the Indian Maruti car will soon take over Jaffna's roads. Sounds strange, but then the officer has been behaving rather "oddly" ever since he pushed the LTTE out of Elephant Pass, the gate to the Jaffna peninsula, in early January this year. The brigadier put down his guns and got busy holding business fairs, sports camps, career guidance lectures and even fixing dealerships for popular household brands. "The Associated Motorways of Sri Lanka, the main dealer for your Maruti cars in our country, has asked me to locate a dealer in Jaffna. I have met a couple of promising chaps and will soon take a decision," Brig. Kulatunga told this newspaper

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/news/top-story/jaffna-gets-back-to-business.aspx>

Obama calls PM, invites him to US

Asian Age, 24 May 2009

May 23: United States President Barack Obama on Saturday invited Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Washington. In a congratulatory telephone call to Dr Singh, Mr Obama said the recently concluded Indian elections were "a testament to the strength of India's democracy". A statement issued by the White House said Mr Obama congratulated India "on successfully completing the largest democratic exercise that the world has ever seen." The statement also said the two leaders recalled their warm meeting in London last month "and discussed their mutual desire to strengthen India-US ties and work together to address common global challenges, such as the economic downturn, climate change, and counter-terrorism."

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/news/top-story/obama-calls-pm,-invites-him-to-us.aspx>

Observations from the Indian elections for Bhutan

Kuensel, 24 May 2009

Congress led United Progressive Alliance made a thumping comeback with even more seats than in the last elections. So how will it affect Bhutan? For Bhutan, the election results couldn't have been better since it ensures a continuity in the Indian political leadership who committed the Nu 100b package and 10,000 MW. For Bhutan, this means no re-explaining, renegotiations or even possible delays, which our government can capitalise on. The standard line in the Bhutan-India relations is that it is between two countries, no matter what the government in India, with most of the groundwork for continuity done by senior Indian bureaucrats and

institutions

<http://kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=12561>

[Manmohan must be bold on Pakistan by Siddharth Varadarajan](#)
Hindu, 25 May 2009

Fresh from his election victory, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh needs to move quickly and decisively to break the logjam in India's relations with Pakistan. In the wake of last November's terrorist attacks on Mumbai, the government suspended the composite dialogue process and placed its armed forces on high alert. The military establishment in Pakistan, which was perhaps never fully comfortable with the direction in which the peace process with India had gone over the past few years, took advantage of the situation to move its forces to the border and generate international concern about the danger of war

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/25/stories/2009052555220900.htm>

[Nuclear test by North Korea is cause for concern: Antony](#)
Hindu, 26 May 2009

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister A.K. Antony on Monday described the nuclear test by North Korea as a "development of serious concern" not just for India but the entire world. "This is a development of serious concern. India is very much against nuclear proliferation. It is a matter of serious concern not only to India but also to the entire world," Mr. Antony said in response to a question on North Korea conducting the nuclear test

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/26/stories/2009052660511000.htm>

[What next for India and Sri Lanka? By A. S. Kalkat](#)
Indian Express, 26 May 2009

While the hardcore LTTE members in Sri Lanka may have been liquidated, over the long period of conflict the LTTE had managed to build up a strong support system amongst the Tamil diaspora, which will need to be dismantled. This does not imply a closure of the Tamil cause which has come full circle, back to the 1970s when there was no insurgency and the Tamils were agitating for their legitimate rights. While India had no commitment to the LTTE or other militant parties, the legitimate rights of Sri Lanka's Tamils are India's concern

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/what-next-for-india-and-sri-lanka/465877/>

[Complexities of nuclear risk reduction in South Asia by Michael Krepon](#)
Hindu, 29 May 2009

The key to nuclear risk-reduction on the subcontinent may now lie in governments' ability to trust each other to share intelligence against common terrorist threats. The Indian electorate has now voted into office a very strong coalition government led, once again, by the Congress party. Pakistani domestic politics, on the other hand, have produced a weak civilian government that faces extraordinary internal security challenges. In due course, dialogue between Islamabad and New Delhi will resume, but it will be hard for leaders to make significant progress on bilateral disputes given existing disparities in domestic political circumstances and the certainty that new acts of mass casualty terrorism will occur

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/29/stories/2009052954910900.htm>

[Manmohan raises attacks on students with Rudd](#)

Hindu, 30 May 2009

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Friday conveyed the government's concern over the attacks on Indian students to his Australian counterpart Kevin Rudd. The Foreign Ministers as well as diplomats of the two countries also discussed the issue. Besides seeking security for its nationals, India pointed out that a sense of insecurity among foreign students would hit Australia's sunrise education industry.

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/30/stories/2009053056340100.htm>

[Engaging Pakistan: task for new government by Chinmaya R. Gharekhan](#)

Hindu, 30 May 2009

The political leadership will have to assess whether the people are ready to forget Mumbai and forgive Pakistan, and whether we can resume the composite dialogue. One of the messages the Indian electorate conveyed during the recent Lok Sabha elections is that the people do not want the government to engage in adventurism in the form of military intervention in our neighbourhood. No one seriously suggested intervening — again — in Sri Lanka, but there were a few proposals for doing so in Pakistan. The 26/11 Mumbai attack generated a two-fold sense of frustration and anger among the citizens: at the government for the disastrous failure of intelligence and lack of instant preparedness to deal with such incidents, and against Pakistan for mounting such an audacious attack on the financial capital of India. In the weeks and months following Mumbai, the public's bitter resentment at having been let down by the government has probably not diminished by much. But the change of guard in the Home Ministry and the decision to revamp the intelligence set-up might have assuaged the public's anger to some extent

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/30/stories/2009053053870800.htm>

[Students seek swift action](#)

Hindu, 31 May 2009

Melbourne: Under fire over the spate of attacks on Indian students, Australia on Saturday scrambled to salvage its image as a "safe" destination for education for foreigners as anger swept through the community which demanded swift action against the perpetrators. Television footage of 25-year-old Shравan Kumar, who was stabbed with a screwdriver by a group of teenagers, battling for life in a hospital here, sent shock waves among the 95,000-strong Indian student community in Australia which sought stern action against the culprits.

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/31/stories/2009053160010900.htm>

[Amitabh rejects Australian doctorate](#)

Hindu, 31 May 2009

New Delhi: Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan has reacted to racial attacks on Indian students in Australia by rejecting an honorary doctorate offered to him by a Brisbane university. The Queensland University of Technology had offered the 66-year-old veteran a doctorate for his contribution to the world of entertainment and Mr. Bachchan earlier accepted the title. The honour was to be conferred in July as part of the celebrations to commemorate a retrospective of his films to be inaugurated in the city

<http://www.hindu.com/2009/05/31/stories/2009053157460100.htm>

[Delhi stunned: UK & China stall move to blacklist Masood Azhar](#)
Indian Express, 31 May 2009

Barely seven months after the Mumbai attacks, Indian efforts in the United Nations to place sanctions on Jaish-e-Mohammad founder Maulana Masood Azhar have received a major setback. In a surprise move, the United Kingdom has joined hands with China to block the Indian request to proscribe both Azhar and Azam Cheema, the Lashkar-e-Toiba operative accused in the Mumbai train blasts, under the UN's "Al Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions" resolution (1267). India had wanted these two along with Abdul Rehman Makki, another LeT ideologue, to be included in the list just like the Jamaat-ud-Dawa and its head Hafiz Mohammed Saeed were added along with other LeT operatives after the Mumbai attacks. The banning under UN resolution 1267 means freezing of assets, travel ban and embargo on arms

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/delhi-stunned-uk-&-china-stall-move-to-blacklist-masood-azhar/468636/>

['Rajiv LTTE's biggest mistake'](#)
Asian Age, 31 May 2009

New Delhi, May 30: Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse has said that killing former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was the biggest mistake of the Tamil tigers which cost them the sympathy of India. "To kill Rajiv Gandhi. They antagonised the whole sympathy of India. That was the biggest mistake I think they made in 30 years," Sri Lankan President Rajapakse told NDTV. He said that when ethnic Tamil issue took root in Sri Lanka, India was sympathetic to their cause

<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/news/india/'rajiv-ltte's-biggest-mistake'.aspx>

[China, India hold seminar on better cooperation](#)
People's Daily, 31 May 2009

Around 100 officials and scholars from China and India Saturday gathered in Beijing to discuss how to boost cooperation between the two Asian giants. "Dragon and elephant have danced together in recent years," Feng Zuoku, vice president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, said at the start of the seminar.

<http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/6667729.html>