

Hindu, 1 August 2008

**Ahmedabad blasts: the usual suspects (Praveen Swami)**

One still afternoon in March 2002, Feroze Abdul Latif Ghaswala watched 40 victims of the anti-Muslim pogrom being buried near his aunt's home in Ahmedabad. Back home in Mumbai, the automobile mechanic saw a printout of a Lashkar-e-Taiba pamphlet, which purported to show a riot victim begging for his life: 'Do you think he should have a gun,' it asked. In September 2003, Ghaswala volunteered for training in Pakistan with a group led by the 2006 Mumbai serial bombing architect, Rahil Abdul Rehman Sheikh. When the Delhi police caught up with him in the summer of 2006, Ghaswala, along with computer engineer Ali Mohammad Cheepa, had just received a consignment of military-grade explosives from the Lashkar for a major bombing in Ahmedabad

Indian Express, 1 August 2008

**5 Naxal-hit Chhattisgarh dists will have to wait for power**

Raipur, July 31: The Chhattisgarh office of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL), which had been given the responsibility to execute the Rajiv Gandhi Rural Electrification Yojana (RGREY) scheme in the Naxal-hit tribal districts of the state, was shut down recently following a delay in the sanction of the work order. Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board (CSEB) chairman Rajib Ranjan told The Indian Express that there would be further delay before the five districts &- Bastar, Dantewada, Sarguja, Jashpur and Koriya &- get electricity

Hindu, 2 August 2008

**IAEA board approves India safeguards agreement**

Vienna: With the words 'It is so decided' and the bang of the chairman's gavel, the India safeguards agreement was adopted by the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency on Friday evening. In an indication of how significant the decision is for the arcane and often opaque world of nuclear politics, virtually every one of the 35 countries which make up the IAEA's apex body took the floor to make statements either endorsing India's case or, in the case of the majority, expressing reservations and qualifications of one kind or another. Three countries - Austria, Ireland and Switzerland - could barely disguise their unhappiness.

Hindu, 2 August 2008

**ISI engineered Kabul embassy bombing: NYT**

NEW DELHI: Evidence exists to support claims that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence assisted last month's bombing of the Indian embassy in Kabul, The New York Times has reported. Government officials told the Times that their 'conclusion was based on intercepted communications between Pakistani intelligence officers and militants who carried out the attack.' Both India and Afghanistan had earlier blamed the ISI for sponsoring the attack. Afghanistan later pulled out of talks with Pakistan, pointing to its continued support for Islamist terror groups

Times of India, 3 August 2008

**Teach India: Education is still the preserve of those who can pay for it**

If the economic structure of our society seems like a pyramid with a large base of low-

income people, educational levels are a mirror image - the lower the income, the less educated people are. Conversely, high incomes invariably mean a much higher level of education. Even after 60 years of Independence, the equation between poverty and lack of education is chillingly stark. Consider the poorest third of the rural adult population, made up of over 105 million people, earning about Rs 11 per day - 61% of them have had no education and a minuscule 0.7% were graduates or technical qualifiers. Compare this to the richest one-third - 33% were illiterate and 7% were graduates or technically qualified.

Times of India, 3 August 2008

### **CBI chief: Extradition of Dawood to top agenda**

NEW DELHI: New CBI director Ashwani Kumar on Saturday refrained from making any direct comment on almost all the sensitive cases being handled by the agency, including Aarushi murder case, but stated it would try hard to get Dawood Ibrahim extradited. The agency has maintained that Dawood is hiding in Pakistan. Speaking to reporters, said he was not in a position to say anything on the Aarushi case so soon. "Whatever I do know has come to me through the media but it does seem that the CBI has done a good job in the investigations," he said. "We will try hard and hopefully not just get Dawood back but also other criminals," said Kumar. On collaboration with foreign agencies, Kumar said, "CBI's role is not limited within the country. We want to have joint operations, investigation, joint prosecution even with other countries."

Times of India, 3 August 2008

### **Karnataka invokes tough terror law**

BANGALORE: Rattled by the recent serial blasts in Bangalore, the BJP government in Karnataka on Saturday decided to crack down on terror by invoking provisions of the Karnataka Control of Organized Crime Act (KCOCA). Chief minister B S Yeddyurappa asked officials across the state to use KCOCA to clamp down on terror networks and prevent future attacks. Addressing a conference of deputy commissioners of districts and senior police officers, he said, "We need to introspect on the working of the police force and come up with innovative plans to fight terror."

Times of India, 3 August 2008

### **RTI is being misused: Law Minister**

NEW DELHI: The Right To Information (RTI) Act is being "misused" in many cases under the garb of seeking information for public interest, Law minister H R Bhardwaj said on Saturday. Speaking at the inauguration of a two-day All India Conference of the Central Administrative Tribunal here, the minister said, "the Right to Information has still not settled and it is being misused in many cases and there are characters who are not interested in RTI getting into it."

Asian Age, 3 August 2008

### **Surat was main target: ATS**

Aug. 2: The investigations of the Gujarat police, the intelligence agencies and the Mumbai anti-terrorist squad reveal that the terrorists who planted the bombs came from Maharashtra and that the Surat bombs were planted a day before the perpetrators sneaked

into Ahmedabad to plant bombs. It has emerged that Surat was actually the prime target and Ahmedabad a secondary target, ATS sources said. Over 23 bombs were planted in Surat, while nine exploded in Ahmedabad. After detailed examinations of the timer devices in Surat, investigators have found that they were set to explode simultaneously with those in Ahmedabad. The Surat bombs were deliberately set for delayed action as the bombers wanted to buy time to reach Ahmedabad. It is another story that the Ahmedabad bombs detonated while the Surat bombs failed and were discovered by the public

Hindu, 4 August 2008

### **Stampede near Naina Devi temple claims 146 lives**

SHIMLA: A stampede on a slender trail leading to the famous hilltop Naina Devi temple in Bilaspur district of Himachal Pradesh on Sunday killed 146 people, mainly women and children, and injured about 230. Naina Devi, a key shrine of the temple tourist circuit of the hill State, is about 165 km from the State capital and is very popular among the people from neighbouring Punjab and the lower plains of Himachal

Hindu, 4 August 2008

### **Terror strikes have not dampened tourists' spirit, feels industry**

KOLKATA: Notwithstanding the threat perception in the wake of the recent serial blasts in some metro cities, domestic tourists still evince keen interest on tourism and travel around the country. This was stated by representatives of tourism corporations from various States at the 64th Travel and Tourism Fair (TTF) that was inaugurated here on Saturday. Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Gujarat, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh were some of the States, which pitched in for aggressive marketing of their tourist spots at the Fair, which is billed as the largest in the country. The number of people milling the Fair, shopping for tourist destinations, pointed to the fact that they did not feel threatened by the recent serial bomb blasts

Asian Age, 4 August 2008

### **Editorial: Too little power for Rising India**

We have got to face up to the fact that India as a whole is in the midst of a serious energy deficit. Insufficient power could well turn out to be the Achilles heel of this country's dream of making rapid economic strides to fight poverty and to remain lodged on a relatively high growth trajectory. It is instructive to note that in spite of the economic reforms of 1991, the power industry has not been able to attract the expected level of private investment, domestic or foreign. True, the particularly worrisome state of electricity availability in southern India, and in Maharashtra, in recent months has been brought about by a jumbling of local factors. Relatively depressed rainfall in the monsoon months has contributed to the inadequacies of the hydel sector in the region. But there is no getting away from the uncomfortable truth that the acute electricity deficit being experienced in the South currently is a subset of a larger nationwide reality. In Maharashtra, there have been no new powerhouses in the last five years and the state may be suffering from a 30 per cent deficit in relation to demand. In this state, probably the most industrialised in the country, 250,000 industries now get power only five days a week. Rural areas have no power for 12 to 14 hours a day. In Bengaluru, the power

supply is to be reduced by as much as 20 per cent, the government has announced

Times of India, 5 August 2008

**ISI looking to push 800 militants into India: BSF**

INDORE: Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI is looking for an "opportunity" to push nearly 800 militants into India and vigil has been further intensified at the country's frontiers to prevent it, Border Security Force (BSF) Director General A K Mitra said on Monday. "We have received information that nearly 800 militants are waiting to cross over to India at the borders and the ISI is looking for an opportunity to push them into the country," Mitra told reporters after inaugurating the newly constructed residential premises of the BSF here

Asian Age, 5 August 2008

**IB may give training to police units**

Aug. 4: The Centre is completely clueless about the perpetrators of the Bengaluru and Ahmedabad serial blasts even 10 days after the terror strikes. Grappling with failures in its intelligence machinery, the Union home ministry has come up with a proposal of giving Intelligence Bureau training to special branches of state police forces like the CID and local intelligence units. The home ministry is focusing on key states and Union Territories like Delhi, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh which have come to the forefront of strikes by terrorist outfits and other subversive elements. The proposal is part of the government's strategy to evolve a joint mechanism with states to give a thrust to intelligence gathering and sharing of intelligence information between various state intelligence units

Indian Express, 5 August 2008

**Road cut off, stocks rotting, fruit-growers look at a Pak detour**

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 4: A 23-year-old died after being hit in the chest by a tear-gas shell during protests today in Srinagar against the 'economic blockade of the Valley' by those demanding immediate transfer of forest land to the Amarnath shrine board. For ten days now, protesters in the Jammu region have tried to enforce an 'economic blockade', blaming the Valley for revoking the decision to transfer land to the shrine board. But it now transpires that supply lines to Kashmir are also being snapped by protesters being led by a Punjab minister and a BJP legislator

Hindu, 5 August 2008

**'West Bengal, transit route for militants'**

Kolkata: West Bengal is being increasingly used as a transit route by operatives of militant outfits sneaking in through its borders with Bangladesh and Nepal and heading for different parts of the country, according to Army intelligence. To compound matters there are reports of a rise in the number of sleeper cells in its districts adjoining the State's borders with these two countries. They work for various militant outfits and facilitate the entry of militants into the country

Daily Excelsior, 5 August 2008

**PM calls all party meet on Aug 6**

NEW DELHI/Jammu, Aug 4: With violence in Jammu region refusing to die down, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will be chairing an all party meeting soon as the Centre today rushed two top bureaucrats to the State to assess the situation. The Centre decided to rope in all the parties to find a national consensus to the problem that emerged over the land allocation to Shri Amarnath Shrine Board, a body overlooking the conduct of pilgrimage to the holy cave shrine. The violence in Jammu region, which has started assuming a communal dimension, was reviewed at a high level meeting today which was chaired by Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil

Hindu, 6 August 2008

### **Rail link to J&K snapped**

Jammu/Srinagar: A day before Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's all-party meet to defuse tensions on the Amarnath land row, there was no let-up in protests in the Jammu region and Srinagar. The agitators, protesting against the withdrawal of order on land transfer to Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, removed a stretch of the railway track in Gagwal area of Samba district of Jammu, severing the only rail link of the State with the rest of the country. They also attacked public property in some areas. Curfew remained in force in Jammu district and Samba, Bhaderwah, Udhampur, and Rajouri towns of the Jammu region

Indian Express, 6 August 2008

### **On Punjab-J&K border, Parivar pitches tent, calls the shots**

MADHOPUR (PATHANKOT), AUGUST 5: As hundreds of Shiv Sainiks and Bajrang Dal activists, led by local BJP MLA Dinesh Kumar Babbu, blocked the NH-1A linking J&K with the rest of the country, Punjab BJP leaders, including two state ministers, camped 10 km away, keeping watch. With passions being whipped up over the Amarnath land issue, the BJP hopes it translates into votes, not just in J&K but in Punjab as well

Indian Express, 6 August 2008

### **Opinion: A country in 40 acres (Pratap Bhanu Mehta)**

Let us cut through the cant of our political class. Amarnath has become a serious communal issue. In an interview given to a Hindi daily, Narendra Modi had, in a chillingly prophetic way, described Amarnath as a second 'Shah Bano'. Whether we like it or not, Amarnath has deepened the Hindu-Muslim divide in many respects. It has exposed the fact that possibilities for intercommunity reconciliation are thinning daily and revealed how every political party has huge investments in a politics of divisiveness that none is likely to divest. It has given the BJP a peg on which to hang its faltering politics. It has given Muslim fundamentalists a pretext to wage war on the infidel

Times of India, 7 August 2008

### **SIMI fingerprint on terror attacks**

Every time a bomb goes off in some part of the country, the needle of suspicion invariably turns to Students' Islamic Movement of India, with the police making tall claims about the Muslim outfit's terror network and its links with Pakistan's ISI. In the past couple of years, as the number of people falling to deadly bombs rose sharply across the country, the crackdown on SIMI intensified as well, even as the group claimed that it

had nothing to do with the attacks. On Tuesday, as a Delhi High Court Tribunal gave a clean chit to the Islamic group, it seemed that the allegations against SIMI may not be true. But a hard look at the banned group by TOI reporters reveals that the tribunal's decision notwithstanding, SIMI fingerprints have cropped up in terror attacks countrywide

Times of India, 7 August 2008

**RJD, SP bat for 'no ban on SIMI'**

NEW DELHI: Even as the Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the order of a special tribunal lifting the ban on activities of the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), UPA constituent RJD and new found ally Samajwadi Party battled for "no ban on SIMI". RJD chief Lalu Prasad and SP chief Mulayam Singh Yadav welcomed the decision of the tribunal headed by Delhi High Court Judge, Justice Geeta Mittal, which had on Tuesday quashed the February 7 notification issued by the government extending the ban on SIMI under the Unlawful Activities (prevention) Act

Asian Age, 7 August 2008

**'Weak' report to pull Muslims led to order?**

Aug. 6: The government's "weak" report on the Students' Islamic Movement of India (Simi) activities was apparently aimed at arresting the shift of Muslim votes towards the BSP in Uttar Pradesh. Political watchers said the traditional Muslim votebank of the Congress in UP has shifted towards the SP and BSP. In order to further strengthen its Muslim votebank, the SP has been trying to extend support to the Simi. With the emergence of the BSP in 2007 in the UP's political turf, a major chunk of the Muslim votebank is now rapidly shifting towards UP chief minister Mayawati's party

Asian Age, 7 August 2008

**Editorial: Simi must be kept under close watch**

The Students' Islamic Movement of India (Simi) was not banned before 2001, although serious doubts had been raised about its activities in the late 1990s. By the time the ban came, the outfit had already proclaimed, at its public convention in Mumbai, its endorsement of Osama bin Laden in the wake of the September 11, 2001 outrage in New York. The ban on Simi has been renewed every two years. The tribunal under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, which determines if the prolongation of the ban can be sustained in the light of evidence adduced by the government, has struck down the restraint placed on Simi, saying that the Centre has not produced enough "grounds and facts" - culled from the last two years - to justify banning the outfit. A Supreme Court bench presided over by the Chief Justice has, however, given an interim stay on the operation of the order of the tribunal, which was challenged by the Union government. The matter has been posted for hearing three weeks hence. Basically, this is a breather to the Union home ministry to get its act together and come up with concrete evidence against Simi. Clearly the ban will not stick if the judicial system is not satisfied with what the government comes up with

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Indian Express, 7 August 2008

### **All parties present a united front in call to bridge the J&K divide**

New Delhi, August 6: The nation's political establishment, split right down the middle after a bitter trust vote, showed a rare unanimity today in its response to the protests in Jammu and Kashmir. In a joint appeal for peace and normalcy, as many as 36 political parties - the two main formations UPA and NDA and almost every regional party represented in Parliament - underlined that 'communalisation of the situation should be prevented at all cost as this would adversely impact on the secular fabric of the nation.' Aware that the situation could dangerously spin out of control, the parties, at a meeting called by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, also called for an immediate dialogue with the protesters in Jammu that would help 'suspend' the agitation

Indian Express, 7 August 2008

### **Ban or no ban, SIMI divides Cong and Lalu-Mulayam**

New Delhi, August 6:: The issue of continuance of ban on controversial SIMI saw divergence of view in UPA with Congress advocating ban on the outfit while its allies RJD and Samajwadi Party opposing the curb on it. Congress did not agree with RJD chief Lalu Prasad and SP President Mulayam Singh Yadav's contention of 'no ban' on Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) and pointed out that the organisation was not only unlawful but also terror outfit

Indian Express, 7 August 2008

### **Editorial: Rise with shrine**

The crisis in Jammu and Kashmir requires all participants to make an effort to step outside their well-defined comfort zones, both in the national interest and in their own. The snowballing protests show two things: Jammu and the Valley are growing ever more distant from each other, and both areas contain significant groundswells of dissent that is not being permitted expression through politics-as-usual. That this was the case in Srinagar and the Valley was only surprising in that the protests last month came after a prolonged period of quiet that had led to optimism among the state's political class. At the

time these columns pointed out the danger of assuming that periods of peace mean underlying problems are being addressed. This false hope clearly extended to thinking about Jammu as well, and now we see open dissension there leading to unprecedented action: as Mufti Mohammed Sayeed has pointed out, the Valley has never been physically isolated before, even during wars and natural disasters

Hindu, 7 August 2008

**Opinion: How to lose a war against insurgency (Praveen Swami)**

Under the benign gaze of a bright silver statue of Bhimrao Ambedkar, improbable numbers of passengers were being packed in a battered jeep for the ride home in forest hamlets. Neither a month of horrific violence nor the annual week-long general strike called by Maoist guerrillas to commemorate the martyrdom of their comrades deterred thousands of Chitrakonda's Adivasi residents from showing up at the weekly market. Chitrakonda in Orissa seemed strangely cheerful for a place which, this summer, witnessed some of the most horrific violence ever recorded in India's Maoist insurgency. Across the road, from the market, the police station didn't even have a guard

Hindu, 9 August 2008

**All-party delegation visiting Jammu today**

NEW DELHI: An 18-member all-party delegation, headed by Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil will visit Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday and Sunday to assess the situation in the wake of the continuing agitation in Jammu over the Amarnath land transfer issue. Besides Union Ministers Saifuddin Soz (Congress), Raghuvansh Prasad Singh (RJD), A Raja (DMK), Prithviraj Chavan and Sriprakash Jaiswal (both Congress), the other members are Arun Jaitley (BJP), Amar Singh (SP), Sitaram Yechury (CPI-M), D. Raja (CPI), Mohsina Kidwai (Congress), Farooq Abdullah (NC), Mehbooba Mufti (PDP), K. C. Tyagi (JD-U), Naresh Gujral (SAD), Akhthar Hassan (BSP) and R C Paswan (LJP). A TDP member would also join the team. The decision to send a delegation was taken at an all-party meeting convened by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on August 6

Indian Express, 9 August 2008

**Kabul attack: India to upgrade intelligence sharing with US**

New Delhi, August 8: In the wake of the suicide attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul, New Delhi is actively considering upgrading an existing intelligence sharing mechanism with Washington that will allow both sides to alert each other in case of a terrorist attack against either of the countries. This has assumed importance as despite close ties between India and the US, the CIA's intelligence alert on the embassy attack in Kabul was communicated through a third party, Afghanistan's National Security Directorate, rather than directly to either the South Block or the Indian Embassy in Washington

Asian Age, 9 August 2008

**1st step to federal agency**

Aug. 8: After over three years, the country on Friday took the first step towards the possible formation of the contentious federal investigating agency on the lines of the United States' Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In a bid to counter the rise of

terrorism, the home ministry announced formation of an intelligence mechanism with representation from the Centre and the states. Expected to be formed within a month, the unit, to be called the Special Scheme of Intelligence, will comprise bureaucrats and top intelligence and police officials which will include the CBI director and IB chief

Asian Age, 9 August 2008

### **Stop harassment of Muslims: Jamiat**

Aug. 8: The Assam State Jamiat Ulema said here on Friday that the state's Muslim community was being harassed by some organisations in the garb of a drive to identify Bangladeshi infiltrators. It warned that communal clashes could break out in the state if the government did not intervene in time. Referring to several incidents in which Muslims were allegedly pulled out of passenger buses and handed over to the police after accusing them of being Bangladeshis, the head of the powerful religious body, Mr Badruddin Ajmal said, "These incidents are provoking the Muslims in the state and we are afraid that they may lead to clashes between the two communities."

Hindu, 10 August 2008

### **Godhra next target: 'Indian Mujahideen'**

A letter, signed in the name of 'Indian Mujahideen' and received by Panchamahals Collector Millind Torwane, said that after Ahmedabad and Surat, Godhra would be the target. It specified that schools would be the main target, but other 'public places' would not be spared. It was the same 'Indian Mujahideen,' which sent e-mails five minutes before the serial bomb blasts occurred here on July 26. According to police sources, the language of the letter was similar to that of the e-mail. 'We are coming to Godhra, stop us if you can,' the letter said. The e-mail before the blasts had thrown a similar challenge - 'Stop us, if you can.'

Times of India, 10 August 2008

### **Now, India faces economic terror**

LUCKNOW/NEW DELHI: As it reels under the mounting terror menace with the fundamentalist outfits bombing cities to kill and maim innocents, India may also be faced with a grim threat of economic subversion. ( Watch ) A spate of seizures of fake currency notes across Uttar Pradesh with the trail leading towards Nepal has confirmed the fears of what the authorities call 'economic terror'.

Times of India, 10 August 2008

### **We'll capture some towns, warn Naxals**

PARALAKHEMUNDI (ORISSA): Maoists have threatened to come out of their forest hideouts and 'capture' towns in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. In a message posted to mediapersons in Orissa's Gajapati district, a rebel leader claimed that the Centre and state governments' "efforts to suppress Maoists will go in vain". The two-page message in Telugu was signed by Bhaskar, chief of the Maoists' Andhra-Orissa border special zonal committee

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Times of India, 10 August 2008

**Navy chief for federal agency to tackle threats**

NEW DELHI: With terrorists, gun-runners and drug-smugglers increasingly making forays into the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), the Navy feels it's time the government established an apex body to deal with maritime security issues. The single-window federal agency could tackle security challenges faced by all ministries handling sea-based activities such as shipping, fisheries, ports, Navy and Coast Guard

Hindu, 10 August 2008

**'Economic blockade' focus of talks**

SRINAGAR: Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil said here on Sunday that the Centre was keen on finding a solution to the Amarnath land issue that would be acceptable to all and not hurt the sentiments of any region. He, however, did not say when the next round of talks would be held with the Sangarsh Samiti, which is spearheading the agitation in Jammu. Mr. Patil was talking to journalists before winding up the two-day visit of an all-party delegation that met here in the day. The delegation will submit its report to the Centre

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Hindu, 11 August 2008

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Indian Express, 11 August 2008

### **Editorial: J&K&L**

It has always been far too easy to think of India's problematic northern state in terms of the Kashmir valley's troubles alone. Jammu and Kashmir's special constitutional status, while technically tied to history surrounding the accession to India of the entire former princely state, tended to be viewed, in practice, as something required to keep the Valley under control. As New Delhi's conception of the state's problems became focused more and more narrowly, it missed what should have been obvious: like so many states in India, J&K has distinct regions, each with its own distinct problems. It is this lack of vision that is returning to haunt the Central government now

Asian Age, 11 August 2008

#### **Opinion: As Kashmir boils, it's time to be firm, fair, consistent (Vikram Sood)**

A few months just short of the October elections, the PDP needed some excuse to dump the government and challenge its main rival, the National Conference. The Hurriyat, which was becoming irrelevant, needed something to regain lost ground. This was at a time when its chief mentor, Pakistan, was temporarily distracted and had little time for the likes of Mirwaiz Farooq and Syed Gilani. Thus, the Amarnath shrine board issue was a heaven-sent opportunity for the PDP and the Hurriyat. Or, if one wants to give Mufti extra credit, then this was a highly Machiavellian move where he got his own ministers to pilot the proposal, using the governor's desire for this allocation, and then walked out, pretending horror. The Hurriyat used a very willing PDP to recreate scenes that were a rerun of 1990 in the aftermath of the Rubaiyya Sayeed kidnapping case. So with our clumsy handling of the situation, along with clever management of the media by the militants and pronouncements by the bleeding hearts, we ended up shooting ourselves in the foot

Hindu, 12 August 2008

#### **Muzaffarabad marchers fired upon, 5 killed**

SRINAGAR: Five persons, including senior Hurriyat leader Sheikh Abdul Aziz, were killed on Monday when the security forces opened fire at several places in the Kashmir Valley to stop thousands of people from marching to Muzaffarabad, capital of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Over 230 people suffered injuries, mostly bullet wounds. The protesters took to the streets to break the 'economic blockade' of the Valley imposed by Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangarsh Samiti that is leading the Amarnath land stir

Indian Express, 12 August 2008

#### **Editorial: Bordering on strategy?**

The government's in-principle approval of a rail link to Leh in Jammu and Kashmir through the Rohtang pass in Himachal Pradesh, reported by this newspaper yesterday, is welcome; but it does not necessarily confirm that the government is all set to match the rapid expansion and modernisation of Chinese transport infrastructure across the border. To be sure, the Leh railroad proposal follows a series of other announcements by the UPA government over the last few years on promoting greater road and rail connectivity between India's sensitive border regions and the heartland. When he travelled earlier this year to Arunachal Pradesh, which is claimed in its entirety by China, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced an ambitious plan to connect the state to itself and the rest

of the country. Similar plans have also been approved for the north-eastern region as a whole. The Indian armed forces too have decided to refurbish a range of facilities that have been lying unused for decades all along the Sino-Indian border

Daily Excelsior, 12 August 2008

### **Kashmir back to 1990 as 1.50 lakh join march to**

SRINAGAR, Aug 11: Kashmir fruit traders' call of "Muzaffarabad Chalo"-supported by both factions of the separatist Hurriyat Conference, Syed Salahuddin-led United Jihad Council (UJC) and Mehbooba Mufti's People's Democratic Party (PDP), which continues to be a constituent of the Congress-led UPA government at the Centre-today pushed the Valley back to the turbulent era of 1990 as it was first time in the last 17 years that over 1,50,000 Kashmiris participated in a pro-Azadi rally and a senior Hurriyat leader was among 7 persons killed in firing of Police and armed forces. Authorities have imposed curfew on Srinagar and all major towns in the Valley immediately after the People's League Chairman, Sheikh Abdul Aziz, alongwith three others, succumbed to the injuries he had sustained in Police firing on his procession on Baramulla-Uri section of Srinagar-Muzaffarabad Road

Hindu, 13 August 2008

### **Fifteen shot dead in Jammu & Kashmir**

SRINAGAR: Police and army personnel opened fire across Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, in which 15 protesters were killed. This was the worst violence seen since the State government's decision to grant land-use rights to a Hindu religious trust sparked massive protests last month. Some of the worst violence was reported from Srinagar, where six protesters were shot dead, in day-long skirmishes between mobs and police. Police killed three more protesters in the central Kashmir town of Lasjan, where police said Islamist-led rioters had attempted to storm the home of the former Minister and People's Democratic Party legislator Javaid Ahmad Mir. A police officer was also seriously injured in the firing, which officials said was initiated by Mr. Mir's panicked bodyguards

Hindu, 13 August 2008

### **Four Maoists killed in encounter**

Raipur: The Chhattisgarh police have busted a naxalite camp and killed four Maoists in two incidents in Dantewada district, police said on Tuesday. One Maoist was killed on Tuesday near the Jagargunda area, about 550 km from here, in an encounter, anti-naxal operation chief Giridhari Nayak said. Police also raided a camp of Maoists in the Arlampalli area in Dornapal district on Monday evening and killed three naxalites, Mr. Nayak said. Police recovered rifles, detonators, uniforms and explosive materials from the camp, Mr. Nayak said

Hindu, 14 August 2008

### **Centre's emissary in J&K**

SRINAGAR: Hindu spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar arrived here on Wednesday for a controversial eleventh-hour peace mission supported by the Union government. Sri Ravi Shankar met Islamist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who heads the hardline

Tehreek-i-Hurriyat, as well as the Srinagar cleric and All Parties Hurriyat Conference chairperson Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, in a back-channel effort to hammer out a peace deal between Islamists in Kashmir and Hindutva groups in Jammu

Hindu, 14 August 2008

### **Clashes continue across Kashmir**

SRINAGAR: Even as New Delhi mounted desperate efforts to initiate a dialogue with the leaders of the Islamist movement, which set large parts of Jammu and Kashmir ablaze this week, clashes between protesters and police continued across the troubled region. Governor N.N. Vohra met top advisers and policy makers on Wednesday morning to discuss means to still the wave of violence unleashed when the protesters attempted to march across the Line of Control on Monday

Hindu, 14 August 2008

### **Editorial: What next in J&K?**

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Jammu and Kashmir policies have been torn asunder by six weeks of communally charged street warfare. Several lives have been lost in police firing and the economic blockade has made a difficult situation spin out of control. Other than issuing periodic appeals for dialogue, the central government has been clueless about what to do. Prime Minister Singh's evident confusion is perhaps understandable, for the crisis is the outcome of policies long advertised as a great success. New Delhi's well-meaning but ill-executed engagement with secessionists propelled the growth of religious reaction in Kashmir

Hindu, 16 August 2008

### **Vohra invites agitators for talks**

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Governor N.N. Vohra on Friday asked those spearheading the agitation over the Amarnath land issue to come for talks. He said he was committed to evolving an amicable and acceptable solution through dialogue. Unfurling the tricolour at the Bakshi Stadium here in the morning amid heavy security, Mr. Vohra renewed his appeal to the people of the State to maintain peace and calm, in keeping with the glorious traditions of secularism, brotherhood and communal harmony. 'It should be our collective responsibility to resolve the most contentious issues through the democratic process, based on dialogue and conciliation.'

Hindu, 17 August 2008

### **Brain behind the Ahmedabad blasts held**

AHMEDABAD: With the arrest of Abul Bashir Qasmi, alleged mastermind behind the July 26 Ahmedabad serial bomb blasts, in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday, the Gujarat police said they had unravelled the conspiracy that led to the bombings. With this, they hoped to unravel the mystery behind similar blasts in other parts of the country, particularly in Jaipur and Hyderabad and the Faizabad court-room blasts in Uttar Pradesh. Announcing the breakthrough at a hurriedly-convened press conference here, Director-General of Police P.C. Pandey said Qasmi was arrested from a village in Azamgarh by a joint team of the U.P. and Gujarat police. He said it was perhaps the first time in the investigations into the recent serial bomb blasts that the police had been able to 'reach right up to the

mastermind.'

Hindu, 17 August 2008

**PM reviews Jammu and Kashmir situation**

NEW DELHI: Even as the Bharatiya Janata Party on Saturday accused the United Progressive Alliance government of being 'directionless and a failure' in handling the situation in Jammu and Kashmir on the Amarnath shrine imbroglio, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reviewed the situation with senior Cabinet colleagues. Dr. Singh held prolonged discussions with External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee, Defence Minister A.K. Antony, Home Minister Shivraj Patil and senior officials of the government to find an 'amicable solution.'

Hindu, 17 August 2008

**SIMI network in many States exposed**

AHMEDABAD: The July 26 serial bomb blasts here that killed 53 people and injured over 200 were carried out by SIMI activists from Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka with local support from Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Surat and Broach. Gujarat Director-General of Police P.C. Pandey told journalists here on Saturday that so far the police had not been able to establish the militants' direct links with the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba or the Bangladesh-based HUJI. 'But we all know that somewhere at the top the local terror groups are actively linked with the LeT, HUJI as well as Pakistan's ISI. It is only a matter of time before the external hand behind the bomb blasts in Ahmedabad and possibly some other parts of the country is established,' he said.

Daily Excelsior, 17 August 2008

**Geelani asks pro-India leaders to resign or face 'social boycott'**

SRINAGAR, Aug 16: With the authorities losing control of the situation fast and a fresh phase of turbulence attaining all the trappings of a religious separatist movement, heads of both factions of the separatist Hurriyat Conference, Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, have asked Kashmir's pro-India politicians to immediately resign or else face 'social boycott'. Geelani has called this avatar of the separatist movement as "freedom for Islam" and warned Jammu & Kashmir Police to immediately "stop your shameful atrocities on the (Kashmiri) nation or face the social boycott".

Indian Express, 18 August 2008

**Four accused also figured in Surat 2001 case, three were bailed out**

Ahmedabad, August 17: Four of the ten alleged SIMI activists arrested in connection with the July 26 Ahmedabad serial blasts - all were remanded to police custody for 14 days by an Ahmedabad metropolitan court today (nine were produced in court while Mufti Abu Bashir, the alleged mastermind who was brought from UP to Ahmedabad late Saturday night, was taken to the magistrate's residence late in the evening and the remand obtained) - also figured in a case registered against SIMI activists in Surat in 2001. In fact, three of the four were even arrested in the Surat case and questioned by the same officer who is now one of the lead officers handling the serial blasts probe. Kept in jails for two years, they were subsequently released on bail

Asian Age, 18 August 2008

### **7 Simi men arrested for Jaipur role**

Aug. 17: The Rajasthan police has arrested seven people, all believed to have Simi links, from different places in the state in the past 24 hours in connection with the May 13 serial blasts in Jaipur. Three were held in Kota, three others in Baran district and one more from Nivai town in Tonk district. The police has also rushed a team to Ahmedabad to investigate if suspects arrested by the Gujarat police had any links to the Jaipur blasts

Hindu, 20 August 2008

### **Narayanan to lead team to J&K**

NEW DELHI: Concerned at the continuing protests in Jammu and Srinagar over the Amarnath land row, the Union government is rushing a high-level Central team to Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday to take stock of the overall security scenario in the sensitive border State. National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan will head the three-member team on the day-long visit to Srinagar. Union Home Secretary Madhukar Gupta and Defence Secretary Vijay Singh will also accompany Mr. Narayanan, government sources said here

Hindu, 20 August 2008

### **Centre to file affidavit on SIMI role in bombings**

New Delhi: The Supreme Court will hear on August 25 the Centre's petition seeking extension of the stay on a tribunal order quashing the notification declaring the Students Islamic Movement of India an unlawful organisation. The Special Tribunal was set up under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. A Bench, consisting of Justices B.N. Agrawal, H.S. Bedi and G.S. Singhvi, fixed the date on a mention made by Additional Solicitor-General Gopal Subramaniam on Tuesday that the special leave petition against the lifting of the ban on the SIMI had not been listed and that the three-week stay was due to expire on August 27

Daily Excelsior, 21 August 2008

### **Over 3 lakh including many children turn up for arrests on third day**

JAMMU, Aug 20: Large scale violence broke out in Jammu district today on third and final day of 'jail bhara andolan' called by Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangarsh Samiti (SAYSS) seeking restoration of 800 kanals of land to Shri Amarnath Shrine Board as agitation in support of the demand today entered into 52nd day and a complete successive bandh into 29th day today. A large number of children turned out to offer themselves for court arrest as it was their day fixed by the Samiti. Though officially police didn't record the arrest of minor boys and girls, some of whom had come to the police stations with nipple and milk bottles in their mouth carried by their mothers in their lap and shoulders, they managed to gain entry inside the police station

Hindu, 22 August 2008

### **Protests continue in Jammu**

Jammu: The former Deputy Chief Minister and senior Congress leader, Mangat Ram Sharma, and his family on Thursday were the target of a mob agitating against the cancellation of the Amarnath land transfer order. Mr. Sharma was on his way to the

Kashmiri Pandit-dominated Bhagwati Nagar area here when the incident occurred. 'I had gone to meet a neurologist for treatment of my grandson. The protesters attacked the vehicle in which my son and his family were travelling. I was in another vehicle.' Mr. Sharma told The Hindu. Police managed to rescue them

Asian Age, 22 August 2008

**Encounter with Maoists: 8 killed**

Gaya (Bihar), Aug. 21: Eight persons, including five special auxiliary police (SAP) personnel and an ASI, were killed and three others seriously injured in a heavy exchange of fire between the police and banned CPI (Maoist) activists at Raniganj here on Thursday. A police team rushed to the Raniganj branch of the Punjab National Bank in Gaya district after receiving information about armed men encircling the bank, deputy inspector-general (Magadh Range) Praveen Basistha said. When they reached the spot, the activists of the ultra-Left outfit started firing indiscriminately at the policemen, leading to the encounter, he said

Hindu, 22 August 2008

**If SIMI is not curbed, public order will suffer: Centre**

New Delhi: The Centre on Wednesday filed a fresh affidavit in the Supreme Court, citing the involvement of SIMI cadres in the recent bomb blasts in Ahmedabad in Gujarat, seeking to continue the ban on the organisation. The court on August 6 stayed an order passed by the Special Tribunal, set up under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, quashing the Centre's February 7 notification banning the Students Islamic Movement of India. As the tribunal order has been stayed for three weeks, the matter is listed for further hearing on August 25

Hindu, 23 August 2008

**Congress leaders in Jammu back shrine land movement**

JAMMU: Key Congress leaders from the Jammu region have called on their party's central leadership to support the Shri Amarnath Yatra Sangharsh Samiti, the controversial Hindu-nationalist coalition that has been spearheading the region's increasingly violent shrine-land movement. 'We hope to impress upon our high command that the Samiti has the unconditional support of all sections of the people of Jammu,' Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Council member R.S. Chib told The Hindu on behalf of a powerful regional party caucus that includes half-a-dozen Ministers of the Congress-People's Democratic Party alliance government

Hindu, 23 August 2008

**Thousands join 'independence' rally**

SRINAGAR: Thousands marched through Srinagar streets on Friday to reach the Eidgah for an 'independence' rally called by the Hurriyat Conference-sponsored Coordination Committee. This is the fifth time since August 11 that such large numbers have taken to the streets seeking 'freedom' in Kashmir. People prayed for 'Azadi' in the collectively offered Friday prayers

Hindu, 23 August 2008

### **Opinion: Time for democratic fundamentalism in J&K (Harish Khare)**

A tiny section of the effete elite in New Delhi suddenly seems to have lost its nerve. So mightily impressed are these Bloomsbury-fied 'intellectuals' with the Hurriyat's capacity to work up mobs and instigate violence in the Kashmir Valley that they have begun to wonder aloud whether the time had come for India to give in to the azadi-chanters. After 61 years of independence, there is no need for any confusion or doubt. All that is needed is to reiterate a few fundamental axioms

Indian Express, 23 August 2008

#### **Kashmir encounter: 3 Army men, 12 militants killed**

Srinagar, August 23:: Seven more militants were on Saturday killed in a fierce encounter with suspected foreign ultras holed up in a jungle in Machhil sector of north Kashmir that stretched to a second day. "The seven militants were killed in fresh exchange of fire which began in the wee hours today taking the death toll of militants in the operation to 12," Army sources said. An officer of the rank of colonel and three jawans were also killed in the encounter on Friday but there were no casualties on the security forces side today, they said

Hindu, 24 August 2008

#### **Put on hold activities, Jihad Council tells militants**

SRINAGAR: The United Jihad Council on Saturday asked militants to put on hold their activities in the Kashmir Valley. This comes in the wake of heightened demands for 'Azadi.' Kashmir News Service, a local news agency quoted Syed Salahuddin, head of the UJC, a 13-member amalgam of militant organisations, as asking separatist politicians to pass a resolution for 'freedom' and limit their struggle to achieving the goal of 'right to self-determination.'

Indian Express, 24 August 2008

#### **Arrests in Gujarat reveal new evidence linking plotters to 7/11, Samjhauta too**

Ahmedabad, August 23:As the Gujarat police and Central agencies investigate SIMI's national network following the arrests last week, they are finding leads that could link the plotters of the July 26 serial blasts in Ahmedabad to the Mumbai train blasts in 2006 and even the Samjhauta Express explosions the next year. Given that SIMI is suspected to be behind the Jaipur and the UP court blasts as well, the picture emerging is of a sprawling network of operatives spread across several states whose paths intersect several times

Asian Age, 24 August 2008

#### **Maoists may attack disguised as rallyists**

Aug. 23: The Maoists are likely to sneak into Singur on Sunday disguised as agitators, according to a report submitted by the district intelligence branch to the state home department. Although, the intelligence report earlier claimed that the Maoists might trigger off a blast around the Tata project at Singur, the fresh report indicates that the Maoists will enter Singur with a motive to expand their base in Hooghly. It may be recalled that on February, 2007, the Maoists in their state committee meeting criticised themselves for "not making inroads into Singur when the situation was rife". IG, law and order, Raj Kanojia said, "We are not ruling out anything."

Hindu, 25 August 2008

**Government cracks down in J&K**

NEW DELHI: Jammu and Kashmir authorities have initiated a crackdown against protesters across the State, ahead of the conclusion of a deal on the communally-charged Amarnath shrine land-use dispute. State government sources said an announcement on the shrine land deal - which was expected to involve the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board being allowed the temporary use of forest land to house pilgrims, and the nomination of both Muslim and Hindu state subjects to the body - would be made as soon as a new police drive against hardline Islamists and Hindutva groups gathered pace

Hindu, 27 August 2008

**Lashkar had warned of Jammu attack**

NEW DELHI: Lashkar-e-Taiba leaders had repeatedly warned of their intention to carry out attacks in the days before Wednesday's terror strike in Jammu. In an August 25 telephone call to the Srinagar-based Rising Kashmir on Monday, a Lashkar spokesperson, using the alias Abdullah Ghaznavi, warned of retaliation for the ongoing crackdown on separatists in Kashmir as well as attacks on Muslims in Jammu. He said that if 'the atrocities against Kashmiris were not stopped immediately, the situation within India will deteriorate for which the Government of India would be solely responsible.'

Hindu, 28 August 2008

**All three militants killed, Jammu encounter ends**

JAMMU: Security forces late on Wednesday night killed the last of the three militants holed up in a residential building at Chinore in a crowded area on the city's outskirts, 20 km from the International Border, ending a long encounter. The fate of the seven persons, taken hostage by the militants, was not known. They included three women and four children. Before taking the seven persons hostage, the militants, suspected to have infiltrated from Pakistan on Tuesday, killed four persons, including an Army officer

Hindu, 28 August 2008

**Shoot orders in Kandhamal district**

BHUBANESWAR: As violence continued unabated in Orissa's Kandhamal district for the fourth day on Wednesday and Christians and their institutions were targeted by those protesting the killing of VHP leader Swami Lakshmanananda, the authorities issued shoot-at-sight orders in eight curfew-bound towns of the district

Hindu, 28 August 2008

**Jaipur blasts: Muslim groups sceptical over arrests**

JAIPUR: Muslim groups in Rajasthan on Wednesday expressed scepticism over the claim of the State police of having cracked the May 13 Jaipur serial blasts case. They said the investigation followed a 'predetermined pattern' and failed to win the people's confidence. The Rajasthan Muslim Forum - an apex body of Muslim groups - said the arrests of prime suspect Shahbaz Hussain from Lucknow and seven alleged conspirators from Kota were based on the confessions made by those held in neighbouring Gujarat. The arrests would fail to stand judicial scrutiny during the trial, it said

Hindu, 30 August 2008

**Centre favours CBI probe into Orissa violence**

NEW DELHI: The Union government favours a Central Bureau of Investigation probe into the communal violence in Orissa, Union Minister for Science and Technology Kapil Sibal said here on Friday. 'We would have liked ideally that this matter be handed over to the CBI as there was a need to render justice immediately. Judicial probes, on the other hand, take a long time,' he said when asked whether the Orissa issue came up for discussion at the Cabinet meeting

Hindu, 30 August 2008

**Six CRPF personnel killed in naxal attack**

Raipur: Six CRPF personnel, including an officer, were killed in a landmine blast triggered by naxals in Narayanpur district of Chhattisgarh on Friday. The blast blew up the CRPF jeep, killing one sub-inspector, four constables and a driver.

Asian Age, 30 August 2008

**ISI-backed terror cells worry MHA**

Aug. 29: The Union Home ministry has expressed fresh concern over ISI backing terror modules in Jammu and Kashmir and down to southern states where sleeper cells are being activated to carry out attack on specific targets. A Home ministry report claims that terror groups backed by Pakistan's ISI could use chemical, biological, nuclear or radiological weapons against India initiating a form of "super terrorism". The report has expressed concern for southern states emerging as a larger base for the ISI game-plan as the agency is believed to be targeting the unemployed youth there