

Hindu, 1 January 2009

Bush speaks to Manmohan, Zardari

Crawford: US President George W Bush on Wednesday spoke to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Pakistan B President Asif Ali Zardari and all the three leaders agreed to avoid any action that would "raise tensions" in the region. Mr. Bush "called prime minister (Manmohan) Singh of India and separately president (Asif Ali) Zardari of Pakistan. President Bush urged both ... to cooperate with each other in the Mumbai attack investigation as well as on counter-terrorism in general," White House spokesman Gordon Johndroe said. Mr. Bush spoke from his ranch in Crawford in Texas

Asian Age, 1 January 2009

Hasina: We'll join India's war on terror

Dec. 31: Bangladesh wants good neighbourly relations with India so that problems such as poverty and terrorism can be tackled in a spirit of cooperation across the subcontinent, Bangladesh's Prime Minister-elect Sheikh Hasina Wajed told this newspaper in an exclusive over the telephone from Dhaka. "It is a victory of democracy, secularism, peace ... the people of Bangladesh today long for a better life and a prosperous nation," Sheikh Hasina said the morning after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh congratulated her. Leader of the Opposition L.K. Advani and Congress president Sonia Gandhi also spoke to her

Hindu, 4 January 2009

26/11: India to step up diplomatic offensive

NEW DELHI: India will launch a diplomatic offensive next week to convince the world of Pakistani complicity in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks. Home Minister P. Chidambaram will travel to Washington on Thursday and hand over 'dossiers' on the involvement of elements from Pakistan to U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Early next week, top Foreign Office officials are expected to release details of the links between the Mumbai attackers and their Pakistan-based handlers, said authoritative government sources. Simultaneously, a high level meeting will assess security preparedness to thwart any mischief from the other side

Hindu, 4 January 2009

Manmohan hopes sense will prevail on Pakistan

SHILLONG: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Saturday expressed the hope that 'some sense' would prevail on Pakistan and it would hand over for trial the terrorists responsible for the September 26 attacks in Mumbai. Speaking to journalists here, Dr. Singh made it clear that 'war is no solution' to the problems between India and Pakistan. The Prime Minister hoped Islamabad would listen to the demands of 'civilised countries' to bring to justice the perpetrators of the 'horrible' acts in Mumbai

Hindu, 6 January 2009

Evidence handed over to Pakistan

NEW DELHI: India on Monday summoned Pakistan High Commissioner Shahid Malik to the Foreign Office here to hand over 'material' about Pakistani involvement in the Mumbai terror attacks. The move is part of the diplomatic offensive by New Delhi to convince the international community and Islamabad to take tangible action against the masterminds of the Mumbai attacks

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Hindu, 7 January 2009

Telephone trail key part of evidence shared with Pakistan

New Delhi: The evidentiary dossier given to Pakistan on Monday marks the first systematic Indian presentation of what ongoing investigations into the Mumbai terrorist attacks have revealed so far. Though many of the facts about how the attacks were staged have been known for some time now, the 69-page document - a copy of which is with The Hindu - provides crucial details about the telephone links between the attackers and Lashkar-e-Taiba operatives and identifies for the first time the names of six 'Pakistan-based handlers' who were constantly in touch with the gunmen even as they wreaked havoc in the city during the November 26-29, 2008 incidents

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Indian Express, 7 January 2009

India signs biggest ever defence deal with US

New Delhi: In its largest defence purchase ever from the US, India has signed a deal to buy eight maritime aircraft from aerospace major Boeing to strengthen the Navy's intelligence gathering capabilities. The USD 2.1 billion contract for eight Boeing P-8I long-range maritime reconnaissance (LRMR) aircraft was signed between a Defence Ministry official and Boeing's country head Vivek Lall here on January 1, Navy and industry sources said in New Delhi on Monday. The Government had approved the deal in its last Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) meeting in 2008 after protracted talks

Asian Age, 7 January 2009

Editorial: Time for harder line on Pakistan

Jan. 6: If Pakistan was in right earnest about pursuing the terrorist case after the November 26 attacks on Mumbai, which external affairs minister Pranab Mukherjee has quite appropriately called "unpardonable," it would have long ago begun processes that were credible and that evoked in Indians a feeling of confidence. This would have been in line with its bilateral assurances to India at the highest level, and in keeping with its position as a signatory to regional and international protocols on terrorism. That, alas, has so far not been the case. On Monday India officially handed over material to Pakistan that it has been able to painstakingly collect, collate and analyse to nail the involvement and complicity of Pakistani "actors" of different kinds, state and non-state, a distinction not always easy to draw in Pakistan's case as the

line between them is thin, as foreign secretary Shivshankar Menon has noted

Hindu, 7 January 2009

India for political solution in Sri Lanka

NEW DELHI: Following the Sri Lankan army's capture of Kilinochchi, administrative and political headquarters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, India has asked Colombo not to lose sight of a political solution. 'There are several aspects to the Sri Lanka problem. No one solution is sufficient to solve the problem. Military solution alone won't work, no matter how the military situation fluctuates,' Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon said here on Monday. 'Until there is a political understanding within the framework of a united Sri Lanka, we can't speak of a political solution.' Humanitarian crises were one direct result of the military conflict and the absence of a political solution. 'We have tried to get help to the civilian population and will continue to work with all those to help to civilians caught in the zone of conflict,' Mr. Menon said

Hindu, 10 January 2009

ISI has responded to Indian dossier, says Gilani

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani on Friday described the Indian decision to 'freeze' the composite dialogue process in the wake of the Mumbai attacks as 'regrettable,' and urged the world not to let tensions between the two countries escalate. His remarks came as U.S. Vice-President-elect Joe Biden arrived here on a day's visit during which he met President Asif Ali Zardari. Mr. Gilani and Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi were also present. The outgoing chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a separate meeting with Army chief General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani

Asian Age, 10 January 2009

Superpower India: Don't just talk, act like one By Arun Kumar Singh

The series of events after 26/11 (including the January 1 Guwahati bomb blasts) have left no one in any doubt about a few facts. Any naval specialist will agree that the manner in which the 10 terrorists attacked Mumbai, including the transit in the Indian fishing boat Kuber, could only be possible with the involvement of the ISI, the Pakistani Army and Navy. Media reports indicate that about 70 per cent of my proposals made in various articles in this paper since May 2008 have been accepted by the government. I hope that they are implemented urgently, especially since the recent roller coaster - initial "vehement denial" followed by "yes, Kasav is Pakistani"), ISI leaflets given to Pakistan Army about dismembering India by 2020 - indicate that Pakistan does not have peace on its mind. Poonch firefighting indicates the shape of things to come from the "epicentre of terrorism".

Hindu, 13 January 2009

India, Afghanistan call for clampdown on terrorism

NEW DELHI: India and Afghanistan, both victims of cross-border terrorism, without naming Pakistan called upon States to prevent terrorism in any manner originating from their territories. A joint statement after a meeting here on Monday between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and visiting Afghan President Hamid Karzai pointed out that it was necessary for countries to look after their backyards since 'terrorism emanates from the sanctuaries and training camps and the sustenance and support received by the terrorist groups.'

Hindu, 15 January 2009

Chidambaram, MEA sing different tune on civil society links with Pakistan

New Delhi: In all briefings the Ministry of External Affairs has conducted since the Mumbai terrorist attacks of November 26-29, 2008, senior officials have gone out of their way to emphasise that India was not looking at a repeat of the measures it took in 2001-2002 when it recalled its High Commissioner and snapped air and road links with Pakistan in the aftermath of the December 13, 2001 terrorist strike on Parliament. Yet, in an interview to The Times of London published on Monday, Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram has raised the possibility that ending people-to-people and trade contacts with Islamabad is something New Delhi might consider if Pakistan fails to investigate the involvement of its citizens in the Mumbai incident. 'There are many, many links between India and Pakistan, and if Pakistan does not cooperate and does not help to bring the perpetrators to heel, those ties will become weaker and weaker and one day snap,' he was quoted as saying

Hindu, 15 January 2009

War is last option, says Army Chief

Jan. 14: Confirming that Pakistan had moved troops from its western to its eastern borders, Indian Army Chief Gen. Deepak Kapoor said on Wednesday that India was keeping all its options open, and that the "military option is the last option". Addressing his annual press conference here on the eve of Army Day on Thursday, Gen. Kapoor said: "There is a larger amount of tension since 26/11. We feel the perpetrators (of the Mumbai terror attack) came from Pakistani soil. We in India are keeping all our options open. This is not hysteria for war, but all options are open - diplomatic, economic and the last resort is the fighting option." He went on: "The military option is the last option. The decision is on the political leadership. The political leadership has said that war is not an option but (that) all options are open."

Hindu, 17 January 2009

No dilution of position, says Pranab

New Delhi: A day after saying the perpetrators of the Mumbai terrorist attack could be tried in Pakistan provided this was done in a transparent manner, External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee changed tack to stress there was 'no question' of India giving up its demand that they be handed over to face justice here. With the Opposition parties accusing the government of contradicting itself after insisting that the Mumbai plotters must all be extradited, Mr. Mukherjee met briefly with television reporters on Friday in an attempt to set the record straight

Hindu, 17 January 2009

Act faster on 26/11: Miliband

Islamabad: Stepping up pressure on Pakistan, Britain on Friday asked it to go 'farther and faster' in taking action against those involved in the Mumbai attacks and root out terrorist infrastructure within the country. 'The whole international community wants Pakistan to go farther and go faster,' British Foreign Secretary David Miliband told a press conference here after meetings with Pakistani leaders, including Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani

Indian Express, 20 January 2009

Our Obama moment By C. Raja Mohan

Judging by its rather defensive reaction to British Foreign Secretary David Miliband's remarks on Jammu and Kashmir, New Delhi appears unprepared to cope with the new approach to India and Pakistan that has been promised by Barack Hussein Obama, who will be sworn in as the 44th president of the United States today. The context of Miliband's remarks is important. That he was denouncing America's 'war on terror' just days before its author, George W. Bush, was about to demit office

merely underlines London's eagerness to quickly adapt to the regime change in Washington

Hindu, 23 January 2009

Miliband was not off-message, he toed the U.K. line on Kashmir

LONDON: The British Foreign Office on Thursday said Foreign Secretary David Miliband's remarks on Kashmir, which infuriated the Indian government, were fully consistent with Britain's stated view that any conflict likely to be exploited by terrorists to kill and maim innocent people must be resolved quickly. Sources told The Hindu that Mr. Miliband had not been off-message, nor did he deviate from the government line while calling upon India to resolve the Kashmir dispute urgently in order to blunt the edge of Pakistan-based terrorists

Hindu, 23 January 2009

India hands over strategic highway to Afghanistan

Delaram (South Afghanistan): Reflecting its determination to carry on development work in war-ravaged Afghanistan, India on Thursday handed over the strategic Delaram-Zaranj highway built by it braving Taliban attacks in which some Indians were killed. Built at a cost of Rs.600 crore, the 215-km long highway, a symbol of India's developmental work in this country, was handed over to the Afghan authorities by External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee in the presence of Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Foreign Minister Rangin Dadfar Spanta

Hindu, 24 January 2009

'Take steps to stop war in Sri Lanka today itself'

CHENNAI: The Tamil Nadu Assembly on Friday made a 'final appeal' to the Centre, urging it to take steps to stop the war in Sri Lanka 'today itself.' Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, who moved the resolution, said the ceasefire should be followed by a political solution to the ethnic conflict and permanent peace in the land of the Buddha. 'I am moving the resolution expecting a positive outcome. If it fails to produce the desired effect, the DMK's executive committee or general council will discuss the issue and take a decision,' he said

Hindu, 25 January 2009

Somali pirates release Indian sailors

Mumbai: After nearly two months in captivity, 25 Indian sailors were released by Somali pirates on Thursday, though there was no word on whether any ransom was paid to the brigands. An official of the Directorate General of Shipping said 25 Indian and three Bangladeshi crew members of MT Biscaglia, a Liberian flag vessel that was hijacked on November 28 by Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden, were released on Thursday night. 'The crew of the ship MT Biscaglia have been released. All are safe,' National Union of Seafarers of India General Secretary Abdulgani Serang told PTI here

Hindu, 25 January 2009

Kazakhstan signs agreement to supply uranium

NEW DELHI: India and Kazakhstan on Saturday signed a major agreement for supply of uranium and a comprehensive cooperation in civil nuclear energy programme. Kazakhstan also invited India to join in uranium exploration. The pact was among a clutch of agreements signed here during the visit of President Nursultan Nazarbayev. President Pratibha Patil was present on the occasion as External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee his Kazhakstan counterpart, Marat Tazhin signed the extradition

treaty

Hindu, 26 January 2009

Terrorism: Kazakhstan stands firmly with India

NEW DELHI: Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev has strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in Mumbai and reiterated the need for intensifying global cooperation in combating international terrorism. Mr. Nazarbayev also assured that Kazakhstan stood firmly with India in dealing with the scourge of global terrorism. In a joint declaration issued late on Saturday night, the two sides expressed the hope that the perpetrators of the Mumbai terror attacks would be brought to justice at the earliest. Both sides also called for early conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism within the U.N. framework