

The Indian Express, 1 May 2005

**India, Japan all set for strategic partnership** (Pranab Dhal Samanta )

NEW DELHI, APRIL 30: India and Japan instituted a strategic dialogue that was spelt out in the eight-fold initiative signed between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Koizumi on Friday. The dialogue is at the level of the National Security Advisor - higher than the one between India and China - which is at the Foreign Secretary level. The focus on economy was clear and significantly Indian business had less apprehension on working towards a comprehensive economic partnership with Japan. It may be noted that India was cautious to the Chinese proposal for setting up the largest bilateral free trade area in Asia. Given that economic compatibility between India and Japan outweighs the competition that dominates the equation with China, sources said, the decision was a far reaching one. The Commerce Ministry too had no difficulties in having this specifically mentioned in the joint statement.

The Hindu, 1 May 2005

**India committed to helping Sri Lanka** (V.S. Sambandan)

KANDY: Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran on Saturday said India was committed to the development of Sri Lanka's north-east through "economic and technical assistance." Mr. Saran, who arrived here on a four-day official visit, made these remarks at a function in the eastern Trincomalee district. The presence of the petroleum joint venture, IOC-Lanka in the eastern district, and Indian assistance to the Trincomalee Technical College were "symbolic and representative of the close and enduring ties that India has with north-eastern Sri Lanka," Mr. Saran said. His remarks on India's commitment marks a significant reiteration of New Delhi's position. They also come against the backdrop of efforts by the Sri Lankan Government to put in place a joint mechanism with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam to work on post-tsunami reconstruction in the northern and eastern districts, parts of which are under control of the LTTE. According to military estimates, the LTTE holds about 130 km of the total 330 km of tsunami-affected coastline in the north-east.

The Hindu, 1 May 2005

**It is a welcome first step, says India**

NEW DELHI: India on Saturday welcomed the "lifting" of the emergency in Nepal as the "first step towards the beginning of a political process" in the Himalayan kingdom. "We call for the release of all political leaders still in custody and restoration of civil liberties which would open the way for reconciliation between the two constitutional forces," the External Affairs Ministry spokesman said. "It has been our consistent view that multiparty democracy represented by political parties and the constitutional monarchy should work together to address the serious challenges facing Nepal today."

The Hindu, 1 May 2005

**India, Japan discuss Security Council membership issue** (Amit Baruah)

NEW DELHI: India and Japan discussed expanding their "G-4" grouping of contenders for a permanent seat on the United Nations' Security Council to include at least two African countries to turn it into a "G-6" during talks between Prime Ministers Manmohan Singh and Junichiro Koizumi on Friday evening. Germany and Brazil are the other members of the current G-4. According to official sources, the two Prime Ministers discussed the effectiveness of the G-4 in the overall context of entering the Council. They pointed out that this cooperation was of an "ongoing nature." While the G-4 has representation from Asia, Europe and Latin America, there is no African representative in this grouping. Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa are all contenders from the continent and, it would appear, that only two nations from Africa are to be tagged on to the G-4.

The Hindu, 2 May 2005

**Tsunami: Thailand system can alert India**

THAILAND: The Tsunami Early Warning System being set up by Thailand will also be able to issue timely alerts to South Asian nations, the Thai official in charge of developing the network said here. The National Disaster Early Warning System, which will be fully operational by 2006 end, can also provide tsunami warnings to India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, said Smith Dharmasaroja, chairman of the Committee for the Development of an Early System for Thailand. Mr. Smith was speaking at a two-day seminar on media coverage of disasters here on Friday. It was organised by the Southeast Asian Press Alliance and the German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung foundation. Journalists from South and South-East Asia were present.

The Indian Express, 2 May 2005

**Indians rush to get Saudi citizenship**

Dubai, May 2: Saudi government's plan to give citizenship to foreign residents has received huge response among the people of Indian and Pakistani origin, a civil affairs department official in Riyadh said. More than 10,000 applicants of different nationalities rushed to get the form. "The crowd was enormous. But, 80 percent of the applicants were ineligible for citizenship," the official was quoted as saying by the Arab News. "However, the forms were given to all to avoid overcrowding." The civil affairs departments in Jeddah and Mecca also reported a similar rush on Saturday, the first day application forms were made available. In Jeddah, the department had run out of forms by 9 am, creating a black market in the application forms.

The Hindu, 3 May 2005

**India and Bangladesh must talk it out** (editorial)

The killing of a Border Security Force officer by the Bangladesh Rifles on the Tripura border is a reminder that India's relations with its eastern neighbour demand urgent attention. Bangladesh has expressed regret over the incident, but the tensions in the region remain high. New Delhi says the Rifles dragged the assistant commandant into Bangladeshi territory and shot him dead

while he was trying to negotiate the return of an Indian villager detained across the border. Dhaka maintains the officer was killed in a gun battle between the two forces started by the BSF. The incident is a throwback to the 2001 brutal killing of 19 BSF personnel by the Rifles, after which bilateral relations plunged to a new low. The India-Bangladesh boundary is home to a range of problems, from illegal immigration and smuggling to a dispute over a 6.5 km stretch of the international boundary. All this is compounded by rampant corruption among border officials on both sides. High-ranking officials of the two forces hold regular meetings to ensure that the tensions do not spiral out of control; the interactions are evidently not sufficient, considering that the latest incident took place as officials of the BSF and Rifles were meeting in Dhaka. But the friction along the 4,000-km-long boundary is just one of several problems in a difficult bilateral relationship.

The Hindu, 3 May 2005

**India, Sri Lanka discuss tsunami rehabilitation** (V.S. Sambandan)

COLOMBO: The Foreign Secretaries of India and Sri Lanka on Monday discussed bilateral issues, including tsunami rehabilitation, defence cooperation, the Sethusamudram project and the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation agreement. The discussions, led by Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran and his Sri Lankan counterpart H.M.G.S. Palihakkara, included a "frank exchange of views" on the developments in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, regional and international affairs, an official Indian statement said. In the health sector, the two sides discussed the proposed establishment of a cancer centre and other projects. The important issues to Sri Lanka now are India's possible role in the post-tsunami reconstruction, particularly in the northern and eastern districts which are partly under the control of the LTTE and a proposed defence cooperation agreement.

The Hindu, 4 May 2005

**1984 anti-Sikh riots an issue in U.K. elections** (Hasan Suroor)

LONDON: The 1984 anti-Sikh riots in India have emerged as a significant issue in Britain's general election campaign. Sikh voters are seeking a commitment from candidates that, if elected, they will help the victims get justice from the Indian Government. There is widespread anger among the country's 7,00,000-strong Sikhs that more than 20 years after the "massacre", the perpetrators have still not been punished. "We are asking every candidate who comes to us to give an assurance that they would raise our concerns in Parliament and lobby with the Government to take it up with the Indian Government," said Ajit Singh, who was a sarpanch in Jalandhar when the riots took place. Now he helps to run a gurdwara in Leicester, which has a sizeable Sikh electorate. Families of many British Sikhs suffered in the riots, which followed the assassination of the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi.

The Indian Express, 4 May 2005

**Fencing stopped in 212 patches along Bangladesh border** (SUDHI RANJAN SEN)

NEW DELHI, MAY 3: Taking a U-turn on its decision to continue border fencing despite protests from Bangladesh, the Home Ministry has suspended fencing along 212 patches where villages on the Indian side stretch upto the international boundary. Sources said a meeting, to be attended by the National Security Advisor and senior ministry officials, will be held tomorrow in this regard. Explaining the change in stand, sources said Home Minister Shivraj Patil now wants the Cabinet Committee on Security Affairs, the MEA and the PM to take a view on the issue, as the consequences of fencing the Indo-Bangla border were not limited to his Ministry. It is learnt that Patil issued the orders even as the BSF and a section of officials urged that fencing should continue.

The Hindu, 5 May 2005

**Bangladesh mourns Gen. Aurora** (Haroon Habib)

DHAKA: The passing away of Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora, who led the India-Bangladesh joint command in 1971 leading to the surrender of the 93,000 strong Pakistan Army and the emergence of Bangladesh, was deeply mourned by Bangladesh war heroes, politicians, professionals and intellectuals. Lt. Gen. Aurora visited Bangladesh only twice after the war, on invitation, but he was the most popular Indian General whose name was inseparably listed in the country's history. In a message to Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh, the former Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, Sheikh Hasina, conveyed her deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and said the people of Bangladesh would always remember Gen. Aurora's contribution in their Liberation War. Bangladesh Foreign Minister M. Morshed Khan, in a message to his Indian counterpart, expressed his deep shock at the passing away of Lt. Gen. Aurora.

The Indian Express, 5 May 2005

**WB transport project fails to keep date with Koizumi** (Santiwana Bhattacharya)

NEW DELHI, APRIL 4: West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadev Bhattacharya wanted the Prime Minister to push for the Rs 2,385 crore Elevated Mass Rapid Transport System (MRTS) project in Kolkata with the Japanese Premier. When Junichiro Koizumi came calling the Centre, however, found the state government was not ready with the Detailed Project Report needed to open the talk. This MRTS is one of the three projects that the CM is keenly pursuing. The Centre is also backing it under the Urban Renewal Plan but getting Japan involved in the project remains a missed chance as of now, thanks to the non-availability of the basic document - DPR.

The Hindu, 6 May 2005

**Manmohan to attend V-day celebrations in Moscow** (Vladimir Radyuhin)

MOSCOW: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Russia to attend the 60th anniversary of the Allied victory over Nazi Germany in World War II on May 9 will underline a special relationship between India and Russia. The leaders of 53 countries,

including the G-7, will gather here for the biggest ever V-Day celebrations, but India stands out among those invited as the only country not directly involved in the world's most destructive war. Mr. Putin's personal invitation, conveyed to Dr. Singh during their summit meeting in Delhi in December, and the Prime Minister's acceptance should be seen in the context of the close strategic relationship between the countries, informed sources said here. Mr. Singh's visit to Moscow on May 8-10, the first since becoming Prime Minister, will open an "India month" in Russia. Later in May, President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam is due to pay the first visit by an Indian head of state to Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This will be followed by a trip of External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh to Vladivostok to attend a tripartite meeting with the Foreign Ministers of Russia and China and a visit by Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar in early June.

The Hindu, 7 May 2005

**'Alternative route raised with China'**

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh raised the issue of opening an alternative route for the Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrimage through Ladakh with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao during his visit to New Delhi in April, External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh said on Friday. The idea behind this proposal was to make the pilgrimage more convenient. Speaking at the computerised draw of lots for Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrims in the presence of Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahamed, Mr. Singh said the country had also raised with the Chinese side issues regarding the improvement of facilities for the pilgrims. A cash subsidy of Rs. 3,250 is provided for each pilgrim by the Government of India.

The Hindu, 11 May 2005

**"India still sending child jockeys"**

DUBAI: India has been named one of the seven countries sending under-aged children to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as camel jockeys, a banned practice. The UAE has made it compulsory for children from these countries to carry separate passports, said an Interior Ministry official, after signing an agreement with the United Nations Children's Fund to rehabilitate child jockeys. The repatriated children would be given aid for two years to help them recover their health and reunite with their families and societies, the Khaleej Times reported. The countries identified, besides India, are Pakistan, Sudan, Bangladesh, Eritrea, Somalia and Mauritania. The UAE has given a six-month grace period beginning March 31, when the new rule banning jockeys under 16 comes into effect. Describing media reports of the presence of 20,000-30,000 camel jockeys in the country as exaggerated, the official said the figure could only be about 3,000.

The Hindu, 11 May 2005

**"Whatever is in the pipeline for Nepal cannot be held back"** (Amit Baruah)

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said it was "true" that the United States had not taken any position on India's bid to enter the United Nations Security Council as a permanent member, but stressed it was important for the U.S. to be supportive of India's aspirations. Asked to comment on the fact that the U.S. was the only member of the P-5 not to have supported India's case despite being a strategic partner, Dr. Singh said, "This is true. The U.S. has not taken any public position. There's nothing more I can say about that." On whether India wanted to enter the Council with or without the veto, the Prime Minister stated, on board his special aircraft, that it was no use counting "your chickens before they are hatched." "There are many problems on the way (of Council membership). I wouldn't minimise the difficulties. International relations, beyond a point, are power relations. We know that power in the world is not equally distributed. Therefore, one has to reckon with all the power equations. We are trying, but I would not like to minimise the hurdles that are still in the way."

The Indian Express, 12 May 2005

**India responds to Lanka SOS, with ATCs** (Pranab Dhal Samanta)

NEW DELHI, MAY 11: Very soon, Indian hands could be directing Sri Lanka's air traffic—at least for a few days. With Sri Lanka's air traffic controllers threatening to stay away from duty demanding better working conditions, New Delhi has responded positively to an official request from Colombo to send its personnel to manage the looming crisis. The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has already identified around 25-30 controllers who can be sent to Sri Lanka to take care of any immediate disruption of traffic, said senior officials of the Civil Aviation Ministry. And though internal negotiations are on in Colombo to avert the crisis, this would be the first time that Indian controllers are pressed into action in a foreign country. To begin with, these controllers will man only the main trunk routes. Officials said the International Civil Aviation Organisation calls for preparing a contingency plan to manage main trunk routes in case of any industrial unrest. And the AAI, in co-ordination with Sri Lankan authorities, is believed to have worked out such a plan for the island nation.

The Hindu, 12 May 2005

**India, Japan shaping a new future?** (P. S. Suryanarayana)

Japan's efforts to fashion a dynamic partnership with India and New Delhi's positive response can be traced to some significant perceptions of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. The two countries, in Mr. Koizumi's view, are now bound by not only their shared old values of democracy and related principles but also a new convergence of strategic interests. A promise of more substantive economic engagement has been held out by both sides in the context of Mr. Koizumi's talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and other Indian leaders in New Delhi on April 29. Capturing attention, though, is the agreed move to view the bilateral relationship under a new prism of their "strategic interests" in the Asian and global theatres. This signifies a major shift from the unstable equation that followed India's testing of nuclear weapons in 1998. Japan was furious with India then. Indeed, in geopolitical terms, the shift has occurred quite gradually. In a sense, the visit to India in August 2000 by the then Japanese Prime Minister, Yoshiro Mori, set off a thaw on the frosty bilateral front.

The Hindu, 13 May 2005

**India's decision shocking: Nepal parties**

NEW DELHI: India's decision to provide military assistance to the Gyanendra regime is "shocking and worrisome," Nepalese political parties said on Thursday. A statement issued by six parties, including the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (UML), at a press conference here, said: "Currently, the country is under the King's cruel autocratic rule, thousands of political leaders and human rights' activists are inside the prisons, press freedom and people's basic rights are suspended. In this very critical situation, it is clear that friendly countries like India [extending] military support will be used against the democratic movement." New Delhi's decision would "encourage anti-democratic and autocratic elements" in Nepal. Asked whether they were willing to work with the Maoists for restoration of democracy, the leaders of the parties said if the Maoists stopped targeting political activists there would be a possibility of contact with the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).

The Indian Express, 15 May 2005

**Dr Singh goes to Washington July 18** (Shishir Gupta)

NEW DELHI, MAY 14: The Indian Ambassador to the US, Ronnen Sen, flew down to the Capital last week with the message that Washington was prepared to give the top-of-the-line version of F-16 fighters to New Delhi and host Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee from June 27 and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh from July 18. The main purpose of Sen's visit was to sensitise the UPA government, Left and the NDA leadership to the American hardware offer and the prospects of civilian nuclear cooperation. Sen met Manmohan Singh, Congress President Sonia Gandhi, NDA chairperson Atal Behari Vajpayee, Opposition Leader L.K. Advani and CPM General Secretary Prakash Karat and apparently made it clear that the F-16 aircraft offered to India will have even better capability than those being currently manufactured. Sen had a detailed meeting with Mukherjee, who will visit Washington for four days. Mukherjee will also visit the US Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, Virginia and may meet US Vice President Dick Cheney. While the Indian leadership has been engaging President George Bush and his principals, Cheney has not interacted with the UPA government.

Hindustan Times, 16 May 2005

**Indian teachers in the Gulf may face termination**

About 800 expatriate teachers in the United Arab Emirates, mostly Indians, will be asked to leave, as the country's Ministry of Education is planning to replace them with their own nationals. In what could be the biggest shake-up of teachers in the country's history, the UAE government is planning on recruiting almost 500 UAE national as teachers to replace expatriates, the Khaleej Times reported on Monday. "The plan, if approved, will see almost 800 expatriate teachers being asked to leave or being terminated," it said. The report said that under the new plan, almost 95 per cent of the new recruits would be women and they will be offered scales with financial allotments. The move is being taken as part of the substitution plan the ministry is pursuing in its all out bid to place more UAE citizens in teaching posts.

The Times of India, 16 May 2005

**Chinese army enters into Indian territory** (Josy Joseph)

NEW DELHI: Hardly a month after India and China signed a landmark agreement to settle their border dispute, a Chinese Army patrol has intruded deep into Indian territory and stayed there for close to 24 hours before withdrawing on May 10. The border violation took place in Asafila area of the Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh. This is the same area where on June 26, 2003, a Chinese Army team had intruded into India, stripped Indian intelligence officials of personal weapons and held them hostage for several hours. The incident had coincided with the then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's official visit to China. The issue was taken up by India with the Chinese government then. The latest intrusion was carried out by a five-member team of the Chinese Army, sources say.

The Hindu, 16 May 2005

**Training centre for construction workers opened in Jakarta** (P. S. Suryanarayana)

SINGAPORE: An India-aided vocational training centre has been inaugurated in Jakarta for the construction sector under a bilateral MoU with Indonesia. Financed under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme, the turnkey-project costing \$750,000 was designed and set up by the National Small Industries Corporation Limited. Indonesia's Minister of Public Works, Djoko Kirmanto, and India's Ambassador to Indonesia, Hemant Krishan Singh, formally inaugurated the centre on May 10. The centre has already trained the first batch of Indonesian trainers in construction activities. Dr. Kirmanto sought India's assistance for similar-model centres in other parts of Indonesia and said his ministry had sent over 400 of its personnel to various Indian universities for higher learning.

The Hindu, 16 May 2005

**Bangalore our priority: France** (R. Chandrakanth)

BORDEAUX (FRANCE): Reflecting a new-found enthusiasm in educational institutions in France to attract Indian students, particularly at the Master's and Ph.D. level, having sensed their potential, more and more of the institutions are throwing open their doors to them. And Bangalore is top-of-the-charts here. Though there has been a sprinkling of Indian students here over the years, a push to get them in droves is becoming noticeable. Meanwhile, French universities, grande écoles (similar to the Indian Institutes of Technology), and école normale supérieures (institutions for master's programmes and research) are on the lookout for partnerships with Indian institutions. Jean Dorey, Director-General of Lyon University, said: "We are targeting India. With China we have reached 'cruise speed' and the tie-ups with Brazil are encouraging. As for India, we are now making a beginning."

The Indian Express, 17 May 2005

### **Delhi backs Nepal parties' agenda**

NEW DELHI, MAY 16: Days after it agreed to release military supplies which had been frozen after the February 1 royal takeover of Nepal, India today said it would fully back the common programme drawn up by political parties to address the challenges facing the kingdom. While taking note of the few steps taken by King Gyanendra like lifting of emergency, the Ministry of External Affairs said the common programme announced by Nepal's major political parties was a "good basis" for them to start a dialogue with the monarchy. "India will support all efforts aimed at restoring political stability and economic prosperity in Nepal," the MEA spokesperson said in response to the common agenda launched by the political parties. New Delhi has been urging the parties to bridge their differences and provide an united front to deal with the political crisis in Nepal.

The Hindu, 17 May 2005

### **China, Pakistan for consensus on U.N.** (B. Muralidhar Reddy)

ISLAMABAD: China is maintaining "close contact" with Pakistan and other friendly countries in a bid to develop consensus on the United Nations reforms. Pakistan's official news agency, Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), quoting a spokesman of the Chinese Foreign Ministry Kong Quan said that China holds regular consultation with the Government of Pakistan on important issues of global interest. Pakistan is opposed to expansion of the U.N. Security Council on the ground that it would only lead to creation of more centres of privilege. Islamabad favours "comprehensive" U.N. reforms," the spokesman said.

The Hindu, 18 May 2005

### **China astonished at Indian reports of border violation**

BEIJING: China on Tuesday expressed astonishment at Indian media reports alleging that its troops intruded into Indian territory last week, with a senior official expressing the hope that both Beijing and New Delhi could find a mutually acceptable solution to the boundary dispute based on the political guidelines reached last month. "I feel astonished at your question because of some mixed information. I don't think that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) will enter Indian territory," Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan told reporters. He was asked about a report, which appeared in the Internet edition of an Indian daily. "As for the specifics you mentioned, I have to further confirm it," he said. "I think we have very good momentum for our bilateral relations, especially the visit by Chinese Premier, which was a very successful one during which the two sides established a political guideline to settle the boundary issue," Mr. Kong said at a biweekly news briefing.

The Hindu, 18 May 2005

### **Advani to visit Pakistan from May 30**

Islamabad, May 18: Leader of Opposition and BJP President L K Advani would pay a week-long visit to Pakistan from May 30 during which he would meet President Pervez Musharraf and other leaders. Advani, who had visited Pakistan last in the late 70s as Information and Broadcasting Minister, would be visiting Lahore, Karachi, his native place Hyderabad in Sindh province, and Islamabad. The BJP Chief is expected to meet Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and leaders of various Opposition parties during his visit at the invitation of the Pakistan Government. Advani was earlier scheduled to visit Pakistan during the recess of the Budget session but postponed it due to the party's silver jubilee national council and national executive meetings in Delhi during the period.

The Indian Express, 18 May 2005

### **Hidden strings and free lunches** (K. Subramahnyam)

Ever since the US state department unveiled its new strategy for South Asia, of US helping India to become a world power in the 21st century, there is debate in this country about the costs of this trajectory. Many observers ask whether there are any hidden strings in this offer. There should be an objective assessment of US motives and a rigorous cost-benefit analysis of this offer. Talking vaguely about hidden costs should not become an easy alibi for drift. The US does not hide its strategy. In a briefing on March 25, the US administration indicated that the world's largest democracy, situated next to China, next to Pakistan-Afghanistan, West Asia and Central Asia, is needed as a stabiliser in this region. Condoleezza Rice, in her address at Sophia University in Tokyo, talked of US-India, US-Japan and US-South Korea friendships serving to engage China and steer it towards integration into the international system. Unlike the Soviet Union, which the US dealt with through containment, China is to be dealt with through the strategy of engagement.

The Indian Express, 18 May 2008

### **As India plus 3 put out draft for seats, US & China frown**

NEW DELHI, MAY 17: Stepping up their efforts for expansion of the UN Security Council, India Germany, Japan and Brazil-the G-4-have circulated a draft resolution that retains veto powers for new permanent members. The draft resolution, which was circulated among 70 countries at a meeting in the UN yesterday, states that new entrants should have the "same responsibilities and obligations" as the current permanent members, including veto power over UNSC resolutions. The draft resolution calls for expansion of the UNSC from 15 to 25 with six new permanent members and four temporary members. The G-4 countries are all claimants for permanent membership while two others will be representatives from Africa. Reacting to the retention of the demand for veto in the G-4 draft, the US called it a "matter of concern". Department of State spokesperson Richard Boucher said this matter "will raise a lot of different views among different nations". China was more vocal, criticising the G-4 for circulating a draft that will "fuel conflict and undermine" the UN reform process.

The Indian Express, 19 May 2005

### **Border fencing violates '75 guideline: B'desh**

Dhaka, Mar 13: Bangladesh has claimed that India's move to fence the border between the two countries with barbed wire, which has sparked frontier tension, was a violation 'in some cases' of a 1975 land boundary guideline. "The recent tension along the border with India was a consequence of India's move to fence the frontier with barbed wire, violating in some cases, the land boundary guideline of 1975," Bangladesh Foreign Minister Morshed Khan was quoted as saying. Khan claimed that India's Border Security Force have started a move to erect fence 150 yards from the border, which the Bangladesh Rifles has 'rightly resisted'. "If there is any problem in case of erecting fences beyond 150 yards of the border, India should talk to Bangladesh. It cannot take decision unilaterally," the Bangladesh Minister said.

The Pioneer, 19 May 2005

#### **Govt must deport 100 aliens daily: HC**

The Delhi High Court has dismissed the Centre's plea seeking to amend its earlier action plan which required it to deport 100 illegal Bangladeshi migrants every day. Accepting there has been a shortfall in achieving the deportation target of illegal Bangladeshi migrants, the Centre on Wednesday expressed its helplessness to meet the target set before the court since the matter was sought to be pursued diplomatically. The Division Bench of Chief Justice BC Patel and Justice SK Kaul while dismissing the application as "absurd", observed, "the application has been made in the guise to delay the entire process of deportation". Stating that the Centre has failed to comply with its proposed action plan, the court stressed that the Centre must ensure all steps to comply with its previous action plan. Putting forth its case, the Centre which was represented by senior advocate Gopal Subramaniam, stated to the court that the issue of deportation had to be "practically feasible." This involved taking into consideration the Universal Declaration for Human Rights as well as the Vienna Convention on Consular Relation 1963.

The Hindu, 21 May 2005

#### **Resume arms supply, Nepal urges India**

NEW DELHI: Nepal on Friday requested India to resume supply of arms and ammunition to its Army. Nepal said it was short of bullets for 5.56 and 7.62-bore weapons and would have to dig into its final reserves if India did not start replenishing its stocks, according to informed sources here. According to estimates by the Indian Defence Ministry, the 32,000-strong "first-line" troops of the Royal Nepal Army need at least 65 lakh rounds of ammunition for its two main types of standard issue weapons. The sources said Nepal complained that it did not receive the non-lethal weapons promised by India after it lifted emergency and released some political prisoners.

The Hindu, 21 May 2005

#### **India signs maritime accord with Thailand (P. S. Suryanarayana)**

SINGAPORE: : India on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Thailand for joint maritime patrols to prevent piracy and arms smuggling. Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Arun Prakash and his Thai counterpart Admiral Sampop Amrapala, signed the agreement in Bangkok. In an interview to The Hindu , Admiral Prakash, who attended an international maritime event here before he left for Bangkok on Thursday, said the accord would help to ensure "the whole vulnerable area of the Andaman Sea is generally covered by joint patrols" with the relevant countries. India already entered into similar agreements with Indonesia and Sri Lanka. An understanding with Myanmar too could be reached in future. One of New Delhi's main concerns was the suspected smuggling of arms across the Andaman Sea to India's north-eastern States and Sri Lanka.

The Hindu, 21 May 2005

#### **Kalam to leave on four-nation tour**

NEW DELHI: President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam leaves here on Sunday to Moscow on the first leg of his four-nation tour of Russia, Switzerland, Iceland and Ukraine that will provide an opportunity to reaffirm and strengthen bilateral ties with these countries. The two-week sojourn will see Mr. Kalam interacting with heads of States, senior officials, scientists and experts. He will be the first Indian president to visit Russia after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. During the May 22- 25 stay, he will have the opportunity to reaffirm the time-tested multi-faceted ties between the two nations. Briefing correspondents on the tour, Secretary (East) Rajeev Sikri said that Mr. Kalam would meet President Vladimir Putin and members of the Duma [Russian Parliament] besides visiting the Defence Research Institutes, the Russian Academy of Sciences and other organisations. There would be an interaction with scholars at the Institute of Oriental Studies and the Moscow State University.

The Hindu, 21 May 2005

#### **India's ties with Israel will not affect our relations: Abbas**

NEW DELHI: The president of Palestinian National Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, on Friday appreciated India's continuing support to developmental projects and said its ties with Israel would not affect the "very close and very strong" India -Palestine relationship. Speaking to newsmen at the end of his two-day visit to India, Mr. Abbas said India's move to develop closer security and economic ties with Israel was "a matter of sovereignty. They can contact Israel in their interests." However, India's position on the Palestine dispute continued to remain the same from the beginning. "India is for a peaceful resolution of the conflict with Israel," he said. He was asked about his talks with President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the United Progressive Alliance chairperson, Sonia Gandhi.

The Indian Express, 24 May 2005

#### **Rendezvous with Khaleda (Kuldip Nayar)**

Bangladesh is rapidly becoming a breeding ground for underground outfits and, above all, for the Al Qaeda. India can see the effect in its border states. New Delhi is horrified over the situation. But, from day one, it has failed to understand the country

which it helped to liberate from distant, exploitative West Pakistan. But India is heading in the wrong direction and finding a solution of sorts by installing barbed wire fencing to keep the Bangladeshis away. This is only deepening estrangement. The recent movement in Assam to "starve out" immigrants has created a new wave of resentment against India. There was once a proposal to have work permits for the Bangladeshis but it was dropped at some stage without assigning any reason. The revival of the proposal may not only help immigrants find work in India but also stop illegal entrants. There is a serious move in Bangladesh to broaden its economy so that there is employment for its people. The humiliation of their nationals not being welcome anywhere in the world is hurting the Bangladeshis' pride. There is some realisation even in staunch BNP circles that their party has to repair relations with New Delhi. The suspicion that India prefers Awami League is still very much in the mind of the Khaleda Zia government.

The Hindu, 24 May 2005

#### **Sino-Indian military talks from today**

NEW DELHI: Top Chinese and Indian military officials will begin talks on Tuesday on implementing the enhanced confidence building measures (CBMs) agreed upon during Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao's visit to India last month. Officials urged caution against enhanced expectations from the talks and said that the discussions between the visiting Chief of General Staff of the People's Liberation Army, Liang Guanglie, and the Chief of the Staff of the Indian Army, J. J. Singh, would be broad-based and preliminary in nature. While signing the protocol on additional CBMs regarding military matters on the Sino-Indian border, the political leadership of both countries had asked the armed forces to discuss the implementation of the modalities. Apart from working out easier details such as expanding the border meeting points and stepping up exchanges between military personnel and training institutions, the two militaries have also been mandated to implement the protocol in areas where previously undefined modalities had given rise to tensions.

The Hindu, 24 May 2005

#### **Pakistan calls Hurriyat factions for talks** (B. Muralidhar Reddy)

ISLAMABAD: Carrying forward the dialogue on Kashmir, Islamabad on Monday formally invited leaders of both the Hurriyat factions, including Syed Ali Shah Geelani, to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan for talks. They have been asked to take the June 2 Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus to visit various parts of PoK and subsequently Pakistan on 'special permission'. According to diplomatic sources here, the issue of India permitting the Hurriyat leaders' visit figured during the April visit of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf and an understanding was arrived at. The stated Indian position is that it can consider any Hurriyat request for a visit to PoK as well as Pakistan. However, it is immediately not clear whether the understanding envisaged an arrangement, under which the Hurriyat leaders will be allowed to cross over to Pakistan from PoK and whether the team will include Mr. Geelani.

The Pioneer, 25 May 2005

#### **Row between G4, Coffee Club over UN seat stays**

A meeting of G-4 countries, including India, and the 'Coffee Club', called by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in an effort to narrow down their differences on the expansion of Security Council, appeared to have been a futile exercise with the two sides failing to find a meeting ground. Pakistan and Italy-led Uniting for Consensus (UFC), also known as Coffee Club, maintained its position that there should be broadest possible agreement on the modalities of expansion of the Council, to which Indian Ambassador Nirupam Sen responded by saying that G-4 was trying to achieve exactly that. But he rejected the suggestion that consensus essentially meant an agreement between G-4 and the Coffee Club. Consultations with the UFC, he was quoted as saying by diplomats attending the meeting, were only one element in the process of discussions with member states to achieve broadest possible agreement.

The Hindu, 25 May 2005

#### **We'll build more weapons like BrahMos, says Kalam** (Vladimir Radyuhin)

MOSCOW: India and Russia would jointly build new weapon systems using the experience gained in designing the BrahMos anti-ship cruise missile, President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam said here on Tuesday. "BrahMos has established a new way of country-to-country cooperation that we're going to use in future in designing new weapon systems," he said. "System design, system development, system production and system marketing have all been integrated in this great programme, which has come through successfully." Mr. Kalam made these comments after visiting NPO Mashinostoyeniye, a leading Russian designer of missiles and space systems. In 1998, the Defence Research and Development Organisation and NPO Mashinostroyeniye had set up a joint venture to develop a supersonic anti-ship cruise missile, christened BrahMos.

The Hindu, 25 May 2005

#### **India, Russia stress need for stability in Eurasia** (K.V. Prasad)

MOSCOW: India and Russia on Tuesday underscored the need to ensure stability in Eurasia and the world and favoured creation of a just and fair world order based on international law, principles of mutual respect and each other's interest. Both sides also stressed that all issues should be addressed through dialogue without any interference or show of authority. This was one of the central themes of talks President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam had with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin. "All issues that come up between large and small countries should be addressed through dialogue without dictatorship and outside interference," Mr. Putin told at a news conference he addressed together with Mr. Kalam. Expanding cooperation in the fields of energy and science and technology and providing thrust to increase the volume of trade also figured prominently in the talks. Energy cooperation between the two countries that had acquired special focus during the visit of Mr. Kalam came in for special mention in the form of the \$2 billion Indian investment in the Sakhalin oil project and supply of Russian nuclear

reactor for the 2000 MW Kudankulam power project.

The Hindu, 26 May 2005

**Kalam arrives in Geneva** (K.V. Prasad)

GENEVA: President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam arrived here on Wednesday on the second leg of his four-nation tour, in what is the first visit by an Indian President to the country in over three decades. As has been the trend during this three-day visit to Russia, the focus of Mr. Kalam's sojourn here would be on science and technology, including a visit to the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN). Switzerland has declared May 26 as science day in honour of the President. The visit to CERN assumes significance in the wake of New Delhi's quest for access to nuclear technology and its plans for cooperation with one of the most advanced laboratories in the world. The significance of the event is also marked by the arrival of Anil Kakodar, Chairman of India's Atomic Energy Commission. Arriving here from St. Petersburg, Mr. Kalam had a round of meetings with captains of Swiss industry.

The Times of India, 27 May 2005

**Russia backs India for U.N. Council seat** (Vladimir Radyuhin)

MOSCOW: Russia has strongly backed India in its bid for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council in what is seen as the most substantive result of President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's just concluded state visit to this country. "Assessing India as an important member of the international community, the Russian Federation reaffirmed its support to India as a deserving and strong candidate for the permanent membership of the UN Security Council," a Joint Statement issued on Thursday said on the results of the Indian President's visit to Russia on May 22-25. Russia's support has added significance because of its timing in the light of the pitching battle for a U.N. Security Council reform. Expressing satisfaction with wide-ranging Indo-Russian ties the Joint Statement said the sides agreed to "further deepen cooperation" in a number of "key areas such as science and technology, peaceful uses of atomic energy and outer space and defence."

The Times of India, 27 May 2005

**US think-tank calls RSS terrorist, Sangh fumes** (Mohua Chatterjee)

NEW DELHI: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is furious with an American think-tank for declaring it a terrorist organisation and lumping it with a host of jihadi organisations and secessionist outfits. The Sangh leadership has written to the Terrorism Research Centre, protesting against the "terrorist" tag, but is yet to get a response. The think-tank has not bothered to take the RSS-which calls itself a cultural organisation-off its website, leaving the Sangh bosses seething with anger. Though the East Virginia-based organisation is an obscure outfit, the RSS is not ready to let the "issue" pass. "It has been there on the list for a while now. We had written to them when we got to know of it and asked them to remove us from the list, but they have not," said spokesperson Ram Madhav. The reasons for resentment are not far to seek, for others on the list virtually make up the who's who of the terror club.

The Hindu, 30 May 2005

**Dhaka to eliminate "any kind of terrorism"** (Haroon Habib)

DHAKA: Bangladesh, which has been constantly denying the presence of Indian separatists on its soil, has explained that Friday's killing of six "terrorists" has proved that it did not allow insurgents or terrorists to operate from its soil. Foreign Secretary Hemayetuddin, who was approached by presspersons after the much talked about joint raid and killing of "six Indian insurgents" got elaborate media coverage, did not identify the terrorists but said "it was a successful operation". He said there was a "clear instruction" from the "highest authorities" to eliminate any act of terrorism along the border. Asked if the anti-terror operation is going to improve relations with India, Mr. Hemayetuddin said it was a continuous process that was linked with the joint operation along the border. The security forces will act instantly to eliminate "any kind of terrorism," he said.