The Hindu, 2 September 2006

**Petitions against Manmohan and over 40 MPs to be closed**

New Delhi, Sep: The Election Commission on Friday decided to close the petitions seeking the disqualification of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee and about 40 other Members of Parliament for allegedly holding offices of profit. Sources said the Commission took this decision in view of the enactment of the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Amendment Act, 2006, providing for exemption from disqualification to over 50 posts. The Commission said the petitions forwarded by President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam had become infructuous, and no purpose would be served by proceeding with the enquiry. However, the sources said the petition against Union Health Minister Anbumani Ramadoss would be dealt with separately as the post of president of the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences was not covered under the new law. Mr. Ramadoss has already sent his reply to the Commission's notice...

The Hindu, 2 September 2006

**Gujarat orders compulsory recitation of Vande Mataram**

GANDHINAGAR: The BJP government in Gujarat has made the recitation of Vande Mataram compulsory on the conclusion of the centenary year of the national song on September 7. A circular issued by the State Government here on Friday to this effect listing all the government offices, schools and aided institutions, however, has not referred to the madrasas or other minority institutions and the self-financed private educational institutions under its ambit. A government spokesman, when asked, declined to clarify whether the compulsory singing of Vande Mataram would cover minority institutions also. Some minority leaders in the State earlier had raised objections about singing Vande Mataram, which they believed was against the tenets of Islam and had demanded that at least Muslim students be spared. There, however, are several schools in the state where Vande Mataram is being compulsorily recited for years by all students and had not attracted attention till the controversy arose...

The Hindu, 2 September 2006

"**Naxalites on the run in southern States**"

NEW DELHI: The Tamil Nadu Government has urged the Centre to reimburse security-related expenditure (SRE) incurred by it tackling the "spillover" of naxalite activities from neighbouring Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Making out a case for reimbursement under the SRE scheme under which only terrorism and naxal-affected States qualify, the Tamil Nadu Government said it had increased surveillance along the border areas and mounted extra vigil to ward off any possibility of naxal activities taking root in the State. Tamil Nadu's argument was that it should not be penalised for doing "good work, vigilant policing and playing an active role" on the naxal front. The issue was discussed at the Coordination Centre meeting on naxalism here which was attended by Chief Secretaries and police chiefs of 13 States and presided over by Union Home Secretary...
Editorial: Politics without vision
The controversy triggered by the People's Democratic Party's decision to demand the sacking of Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Chief Minister Muzzaffer Hussain Beigh might turn out to be a storm in a teacup. At its core the PDP's decision to demand that Mr. Beigh be jettisoned from the Council of Ministers is the outcome of nothing more serious than a personality clash. PDP president Mehbooba Mufti has made no secret of her dislike for the ambitious lawyer-politician. Mr. Beigh, in turn, believes that he, rather than former Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Saeed's daughter, is best equipped to lead the PDP. The initial stance of Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad was that the PDP ought not to interfere in his assignment of portfolios to Ministers. But the central leadership of the Congress has, in effect, overruled him by announcing that "it is an internal matter of the PDP... [and] we do not interfere in it." All parties know the room for manoeuvre is limited. Had this coalition arrangement collapsed, the Congress might conceivably have found a willing partner in the National Conference, which is politically in the ascendant. Congress leaders know that the PDP, which has no reach outside the Kashmir Valley, is no threat to their own political interests. By contrast, the National Conference would be as much a competitor as a partner. Therefore, in balance, it suits the interests of the Congress to accommodate the PDP's demand and not let the coalition sink at this juncture...

AIPJD merger with Cong. won't affect JDS-BJP Govt: BJP
Bangalore, September: Making light of the formal merger of the All India Progressive Janata Dal (AIPJD) with the Congress, the BJP today asserted it would have no impact on the stability of its coalition government with the JDS in Karnataka. "The (merger) rally will not have any impact on the stability of our coalition government. It is stable, firm and will carry forward the agenda it has set for itself," senior BJP leader M Venkaiah Naidu told PTI here. "AIPJD leader Siddaramaiah's entry will hurt the Congress more than it helps. They (Congress) will realise it in the long term," he said dismissing the rally where Congress President Sonia Gandhi announced the formal merger. Naidu said the way the Congress was portraying the rally, "they would be in for a big disappointment". This political show will have no impact". He said Siddaramaiah's entry would alienate "major sections" from the Congress and remarked sarcastically, "polarisation will happen in the reverse". The Congress' traditional base would be further eroded, he claimed...

Al-Badr terrorist flown to Mumbai
New Delhi, September 2: Akmal Hashim, a terrorist of Pakistani nationality, arrested from the Damal Hanjipora area of Jammu and Kashmir on August 23, was flown to Mumbai on Saturday. Belonging to the al-Badr militant outfit, Hashim is to be questioned for his possible role in the July 11 serial terror strikes in the metropolis. Hashim's possible role in the Mumbai serial bombings has been the subject of intense media speculation ever since he was held near the village of Nandimarg in the course of an operation by the 3 Para Commando regiment. According to Hashim's interrogation report, a copy of which has been exclusively obtained by , a group of Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists with whom he
had been billeted in the Gool-Gulabgarh high-altitude forests of Udhampur claimed organisational responsibility for the bombings…

The Hindu, 3 September 2006

**BJP rejects fatwa against recitation of Vande Mataram**

New Delhi, September 2: The Bharatiya Janata Party on Saturday rejected the fatwa issued by the Dar-ul-Uloom of Deoband asking Muslim parents to withdraw their children from schools forcing them to sing the national song "Vande Mataram." Talking to reporters here, BJP vice-president Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said such diktat using the shield of Islam was not just against the culture of this country but would also find no support from common Muslims. Clerics who regard Vande Mataram as anti-Muslim were people with an 'anti-national' mindset, and the fatwa an expression of a 'separatist' mindset, he said. Reacting to Dar-ul-Uloom criticising him for extending support to the singing of the national song, Mr. Naqvi said the fatwa by a handful of "fanatics" was against the basic tenets of Islam. They would not find support from the Muslim people, who were all patriots and whose loyalties could not be swayed by such forces...

The Hindu, 3 September 2006

**Aircraft deal: action as per law, says Nitish**

PATNA: With the purchase of an aircraft during President's Rule snowballing into a controversy, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Saturday said he would look into it and take action as per law. The reported conclusion of the Principal Accountant-General (PAG) that the purchase of the King Air C90B in 2005 was not in conformity with rules has put the focus on Chief Secretary G.S. Kang as the State was under President's Rule with then Governor Buta Singh at the helm of affairs. The PAG said the Governor had been kept in the dark regarding the procedures and his approval was obtained without bringing to his notice that tender procedures had been waived in this case and the State shelled out $2,765,000 for the "phased out" aircraft. The proposal was first put before the then Chief Minister Rabri Devi in November 2004. The clearance was not obtained and following the imposition of Central rule, the file was forwarded to Mr. Singh in March 2005...

The Hindustan Times, 4 September 2006

**Jharkhand: Munda government on the verge of a crisis**

New Delhi, September 4: The Arjun Munda government in Jharkhand appears to be on the verge of a crisis with three ministers -- all independents -- camping in the national capital to explore possibilities of crossing over to the UPA. The three ministers -- Enos Ekka, Hari Narayan Roy and Madhu Okra -- are likely to hold talks with the UPA leadership to topple the NDA government in the state, which enjoys a razor-thin majority in the 81-member assembly. The three ministers, who play a key factor in deciding the balance are likely to meet Congress president Sonia Gandhi during their stay in the capital. The Munda government enjoys the backing of 43 MLAs, including the support of Joba Majhi, whose local outfit UGDP officially aligned with the UPA during the elections. NDA also claims that with the support from the lone nominated member it could sail through any trial of strength on the floor of the house. UPA, on the other hand, claims support of 39 MLAs including that of Majhi and in the event of three ministers crossing over to their side the opposition alliance could rock Munda's boat. The UPA
expects three more MLAs to join its side.

**Ujjain Prof's murder: BJP workers to be quizzed**

Ujjain, September 4: The Madhya Pradesh CID, probing the death of professor H S Sabharwal during student union polls on August 26, has identified nine persons, including two BJP corporators, for recording their statement in the case. CID will summon these persons among others to record their statement in the case pertaining to professor Sabharwal's death, official sources said. Those shortlisted by CID were BJP Corporators-- Sonu Gehlot and SN Chouhan, BJP leader Sanwar Patel, Bhalu Bhadoria, Hemant Dube, Rizwan Choudhry, Pankaj Mishra, Vishal Rajoria and Sudhir Yadav, the sources said.

Last night as the news spread that the police was searching for these people, BJP workers in large numbers gheraoed the Jiwajiganj and Dewasgate police stations, protesting against the police action against their activists. Since last night police had been unable to record statement of any of the persons shortlisted by the CID, the sources added.

**PM to discuss terror issue with CMs on Tuesday**

New Delhi, September 3: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has convened a meeting with the Chief Ministers of all states in New Delhi on Tuesday to discuss co-ordinated steps to prevent terrorists attacks similar to the July 11 serial blasts in Mumbai. The decision comes close on the heels of a meeting with the Chief Ministers of Naxal-hit states to augment security. On Tuesday, the states are expected to discuss creation of a separate police force to effectively deal with the problems of terrorism and Naxalism as suggested by President APJ Abdul Kalam last week. In the wake of the Mumbai blasts, both Kalam and Dr Singh have called for launching a war on terrorism, aided and abetted from across the border. At the instance of Dr Singh, a Group of 8 (G8) highly industrialised nations, including the US and the UK, at a July Summit in St Petersberg, Russia, adopted a resolution declaring its determination to help fight terrorism anywhere in the world, thereby jettisoning its segmented approach...

**Naxals, government rethinking strategies - K. Srinivas Reddy**

The naxalites have launched a "socio-economic investigation" aimed at reworking their tactics. And the government has moved to ensure greater coordination in countering them. Both the naxalites and the Indian state have launched exercises to fine-tune their revolutionary and counter-revolutionary strategies respectively. The naxalites have, if their politburo document is any indication, launched a "socio-economic investigation" in places where their movement is strong and also in targeted areas to identify new issues faced by the people. The "social investigation" is apparently aimed at redefining the strategies and field-level tactics during a brainstorming session, the Special Congress, expected to be convened shortly. The state too has been immersed in an exercise to redefine its strategy, with a professed focus on fusing development and security-related issues to formulate a comprehensive and proactive action plan. For the first time, all the 13 affected States submitted their action plans during a review meeting on naxalism in...
New Delhi...

The Hindu, 5 September 2006
**Oil firms' officers drop strike plan**
New Delhi, September 4: Officers of state-owned oil firms on Monday night called off their proposed indefinite strike from Tuesday as they found the Government's offer on higher wages "reasonable" and considered Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's appeal not to resort to agitation. The decision to drop the strike plan came at a two-hour meeting of the Oil Sector Officers' Association (OSOA) that ended well past midnight...

The Hindu, 5 September 2006
**Orissa flood situation still critical**
Bhubaneshwar, September 4: Millions of flood-hit people in Orissa continued to suffer as relief and rescue operations were severely affected on Monday due to incessant rain and rising water level in the marooned areas. The administration was not able to execute relief operations in the worst-hit blocks of Kendrapara district as inclement weather affected movement of boats used for dispatching relief materials to the marooned villages...

The Hindu, 5 September 2006
**Chief Ministers meet today on internal security**
New Delhi, September 4: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will preside over a meeting of Chief Ministers here on Tuesday to discuss ways to strengthen internal security in the wake of heightened terror threat, naxalite menace and insurgency in the northeast. The meeting is being held at the Prime Minister's 7 Race Course Road residence. Home Minister Shivraj Patil will make the opening remarks...

Hindustan Times, 5 September 2006
**Kanha declared India's best tiger reserve**
Bhopal, September 4: KANHA TIGER Reserve has been declared India's best facility by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). State Forests Minister Himmat Kothari on Monday informed that the Panna and Pench Tiger Reserves of the state have been adjudged very good and Bandhavgarh and Satpura Tiger Reserves have been categorised as good in the evaluation. Government of India through IUCN carried out the evaluation of 28 tiger reserves of the country...

The Hindu, 6 September 2006
**Manmohan calls for greater alertness**
New Delhi, September 5: Justifying the concern about the increasing activities of externally-inspired and directed terrorist outfits in the country, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Tuesday said intelligence agencies had warned of a further intensification of violent terror activities with the possibility of more "fidayeen" (suicide) attacks. Portraying an alarming scenario of the possible terrorist activities, he said that use of suicide bombers; attacks on economic and religious targets and targeting of vital installations, including nuclear establishments and Army camps, were very much on the agenda of terrorist outfits...
The Indian Express, 6 September 2006
**NDA watches Jharkhand slipping away, Cong waiting**
New Delhi, Ranchi September 5: Battling dissidence for months, the BJP's coalition government in Jharkhand was tottering today after four ministers resigned and reduced the Arjun Munda government to a minority. This prompted the Opposition UPA to step up moves to oust the government. Jharkhand's ore only for units in the state, says policy War memorial for, 71 heroes near Ranchi Jharkhand VIPs to fly around in choppers Munda eyes partners for healthcare Jharkhand rehab formula before industries move in Though Munda claimed he would prove his majority, the numbers stood against him: in a house of 81, the NDA strength dropped from 42 to 38 while the UPA claimed its numbers had risen from 39 to 43...

The Hindu, 6 September 2006
**Ceasefire with ULFA extended till September 15**
New Delhi, September 5: Extending the ceasefire with banned United Liberation Front of Asom for the third time till September 15, the Centre on Tuesday night said it was expecting "some communication" within a fortnight on whether the insurgent group would participate in the talks directly. "We are expecting some communication" from the banned organisation within 10 days, Union Home Secretary V.K. Duggal said after his meeting with the ULFA mediators Indira Goswami and Rebati Phukan, who handed over a letter from the Peoples' Consultative Group for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The Centre had decided to extend the suspension of Army operation till September 15, he said...

Hindustan Times, 6 September 2006
**Fight terror but don't cut out Muslims, PM tells CMs**
New Delhi, September 5: A fortnight ago, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had heard Muslim leaders articulate the community's sense of insecurity after terror attacks in the country. On Tuesday, Singh echoed their concerns before chief ministers at an internal security conference and cautioned them to the "deleterious" consequences of this feeling for the country. The thrust of the Prime Minister's message to the states, including those ruled by the BJP, was that the best way to fight terrorism - besides the police response - was by not creating an environ where terror elements would have nurseries of support...

The Hindu, 7 September 2006
**Munda gets a week to prove majority**
New Delhi/Ranchi: The Jharkhand Governor, Syed Sibtey Razi, on Wednesday gave Chief Minister Arjun Munda seven days to prove his Government's majority on the floor of the Assembly. Mr. Munda heads a Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance Government. According to agency reports from the Jharkhand capital Ranchi, Mr. Munda, who met Mr. Razi in the morning, told the Governor that he was confident of proving the majority of his Government. Citing the Supreme Court judgment in the Bommai case, he sought an opportunity to do so on the floor of the House...
India may not sing Vande Mataram in unison

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's Vande Mataram is set to reverberate across lakhs of schools on Thursday, but the most jarring notes are the chasms and controversies created by HRD minister Arjun Singh's decision to celebrate the anniversary of the national song. Most states have decided to toe the Centre's line and make it compulsory for schools to sing it, but few have chosen to make it optional...

NHRC asks for report on Sabharwal's death

New Delhi, September 6: Taking suo motu cognisance of media reports on the killing of Harbhajan Singh Sabharwal, a professor of Ujjain's Government Madhav College of Arts and Commerce, the National Human Rights Commission on Wednesday called for a report from the Madhya Pradesh Government. The Chief Secretary and Director General of Police have been asked to look into the matter and send a report within 15 days. After going through the media reports, the Commission said that if the press reports were correct, it raised a "serious issue of violation of human rights of the citizens."…

Malfunctioning of regulator led to GSLV failure: ISRO chief

Bangalore, September 6: The primary cause for the failure of the Geosynchronous Solar Launch Vehicle-F02 (GSLV-F02) was the sudden loss of thrust in one of the four liquid propellant strap-on stages immediately after lift-off, said G. Madhavan Nair, Chairman, Indian Space Research Organisation, on Wednesday. He was speaking to presspersons here on the findings of the 15-member Failure Analysis Committee, set up to investigate the failure of the GSLV-F02 mission on July 10. The FAC submitted its report to ISRO on Tuesday...

India sings Vande Mataram in unison

Children in schools across the country and employees in offices rose to sing Vande Mataram on Thursday morning under a directive from the Union HRD ministry. But the day didn't pass without minor scuffles and boycotts providing discordant notes of defiance...

Government can withhold pension for grave misconduct: Supreme Court

New Delhi, September 7: The Government can withhold pension for a specified period if an employee is found, in departmental or judicial proceedings, guilty of grave misconduct or negligence, the Supreme Court has held. A Bench comprising Chief Justice Y.K. Sabharwal, Justice C.K. Thakker and Justice P.K. Balasubramanyan gave this ruling, upholding the validity of Rule 10 (1) of the West Bengal Services (Death-cum-Retirement Benefit) Rules, 1971 providing for withholding pension or part of it for certain reasons...
The Times of India, 8 September 2006

**Its action time in Jharkhand**
Ranchi, September 7: Jharkhand Speaker Inder Singh Namdhari on Thursday moved to serve notices on three MLAs — Enos Ekka, Kamlesh Singh and Stephen Marandi — on separate petitions seeking their disqualification as per the 10th Schedule of the Constitution. While the petition against Ekka was pending with him for the last one-and-half years, the petitions against Singh and Marandi were filed by some BJP legislators a few days back, he said...

The Hindu, 9 September 2006

**31 killed, 100 injured in Malegaon blasts**
Mumbai, September 8: Thirty-one people were killed and over 100 injured in two bomb blasts in Malegaon in Nashik district of Maharashtra on Friday. The explosions, which occurred in the heart of the old city, triggered tension and fears of a communal conflagration. The blasts occurred around 1.50 p.m., when people had gathered for Friday prayers and to offer special prayers on the occasion of Shab-e-Barat. The two explosions happened in quick succession at the Bada Kabristan and at Mushaira Chowk, about one km away. This led to a stampede as people rushed out of the Kabristan. Many of those killed and injured were children...

The Hindu, 9 September 2006

**Jharkhand MLAs say notice is mala fide**
New Delhi, September 8: The Supreme Court will hear on Monday petitions filed by three Jharkhand MLAs seeking a direction to restrain Speaker Inder Singh Namdhari from disqualifying them on grounds of defection. A Bench comprising Chief Justice Y. K. Sabharwal and Justice C. K. Thakker fixed the date after counsel K. V. Viswanathan mentioned the filing of the petitions, seeking early hearing. The MLAs also sought a direction to the Speaker to maintain status quo on the number of members in the Assembly until the Arjun Munda Government proved its majority on the floor of the House...

The Hindu, 9 September 2006

**Attacks will continue till Pakistan is controlled: Vajpayee**
Dehra Dun, September 8: Terror attacks in India will continue till Pakistan is controlled, the former Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, said here on Friday while referring to the Malegaon attack in Maharashtra. He demanded that the Government strengthen intelligence gathering and take strong action to curb terrorism. Speaking at a public meeting here, hours after the terrorist attack in Malegaon, Mr. Vajpayee said that the place had repeatedly witnessed such murderous incidents. This had happened when the Mumbai blasts case remained unsolved...

The Hindu, 9 September 2006

**Chidambaram hopeful of 8% growth**
New Delhi, September 8: Confident of maintaining an average eight per cent growth rate for the economy, Finance Minister P. Chidambaram on Friday said inflation would be contained between 4.5 and 5 per cent to prevent further strains on the common man.
Despite rising prices, he felt the common man had been a major beneficiary of the UPA Government's policies, which had yielded more jobs and higher investments. Addressing a press conference on economic performance during the two-and-a-half years of the UPA regime, he highlighted the positive average growth rate of eight per cent maintained over this period as well as rising tax and non-tax revenues, which would help him contain the fiscal and revenue deficits to within budget estimates...

The Hindu, 9 September 2006

**Anti-submarine warfare system handed over to Navy**
Visakapatnam, September 8: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on Friday handed over the integrated anti-submarine warfare (ASW) equipment to the Navy. Chief Controller, Defence R&D, A. Sivathanu Pillai, handed over the equipment to Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Naval Command and Chief of Naval Staff designate Sureesh Mehta during a brief function on board INS Ranjit...

Hindustan Times, 11 September 2006

**PM rebuffs Rajnath, 'efforts on' for talks with Pervez**
New Delhi, September 10: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Sunday "shot down" BJP's demand that he should not meet Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf in Havana during the NAM Summit. Addressing reporters on board the special aircraft, he said, "We will cross the bridge when we come to it" - in response to queries by journalists, accompanying him on his two-nation trip to Brazil and Cuba, about BJP president Rajnath Singh's demand that he should not meet to Musharraf on the sidelines of the summit in Derhadun on Sunday...

The Hindu, 11 September 2006

**`No back-door entry in public employment'**
New Delhi, September 10: There is no room for back-door entry in public employment and temporary employees have no vested right to be regularised contrary to the scheme of merit and constitutional provisions, the Supreme Court has held. A Bench consisting of Justices G.P. Mathur and Dalveer Bhandari held that the High Courts could not issue directions to regularise the services of temporary or ad hoc employees in the absence of any existing vacancies...

The Hindu, 11 September 2006

**UPA, Left parties stage protest in Jharkhand**
Ranchi, September 10: The United Progressive Alliance and Left parties on Sunday staged a peaceful and symbolic demonstration near the official residence of Jharkhand Assembly Speaker Inder Singh Namdhari. The protest was over his decision to hear disqualification petitions against three MLAs, ahead of the trust vote to be moved on September 14. While a dozen Communist activists reached near the gate of the Speaker's residence, about 50 leaders and activists of the UPA were stopped by the police about 300 metres away from the gate...
The Hindu, 11 September 2006

My intention is to ensure 8 per cent economic growth: Chidambaram
Maraimalainagar, September 10: Union Finance Minster P. Chidambaram, on Sunday asserted that he was willing to tolerate any debate and, perhaps, even dissent as long as it did not come in the way of the targeted eight per cent growth of the Indian economy.
Addressing a function got up by SPEL Semiconductor Limited to launch leadless moulded packages at Maraimalai Nagar, Mr. Chidambaram said, "it is my intention to ensure that India grows at eight per cent." He made this remark specifically addressing the overseas visitors in the audience...

Hindustan Times, 11 September 2006

Editorial- Bending the law
Three Murder cases " those of Jessica Lall, Priyadarshini Mattoo and Nitish Katara" have caught national attention since they focus on our criminal justice system. Investigations and judgments in the Jessica and Mattoo cases have come in for criticism while the slow progress in the trial of the Katara case has caused anguish in legal circles as well as in civil society. Public outcry over the development of the cases demonstrates that people are no longer willing to tolerate what they perceive as miscarriage of justice. But those agitating against the limitations in law have to acknowledge their faith in the prevailing system until the time amendments are made...

The Hindu, 12 September 2006

PM for fair probe into Malegaon blasts
On Board PM's Special Aircraft, September 11: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today said, it would be inappropriate to "rule out or rule in" the involvement of Hindu groups in Malegaon blasts and felt investigations should be fair…On Sunday, he had described the multiple blasts as a shame and said the Government was yet to get to the bottom of it.

The Times of India, 12 September 2006

'93 Mumbai blasts: Court to deliver verdict
Mumbai, September 11: Security was tightened in and around the designated TADA court which is slated to decide the fate of actor Sanjay Dutt and 122 other accused in the much-awaited verdict, coming 13 years after serial explosions rocked the city. On August 10, the court had started dictation of the verdict and said it would deliver the final judgement on September 12...

The Hindu, 12 September 2006

Mannmohan writes to States on minorities
New Delhi, September 11: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has asked the Chief Ministers to fix targets for each programme under the new 15-point programme for minorities' welfare. In a letter to them before leaving on a nine-day visit to Latin America on Sunday, Dr. Singh asserted the importance of maintaining peace and communal harmony, providing the minorities a fair share in Central and State Government employment, including public sector undertakings, and implementing schemes for their economic uplift...
**The Hindu, 12 September 2006**

**No court order on Jharkhand MLAs' plea**

New Delhi, September 11: The Supreme Court on Monday declined to pass any order on the petitions filed by three Jharkhand MLAs for a direction to restrain Speaker Inder Singh Namdhari from disqualifying them on grounds of defection. A Bench consisting of Justices K.G. Balakrishnan and D.K. Jain adjourned the proceedings to September 14, saying "we will wait for the Speaker's decision." Chief Minister Arjun Munda is to prove his majority in the House on September 14...

**The Hindu, 14 September 2006**

**UPA to name Chief Minister in a day**

Ranchi, September 13: UPA will announce its Chief Minister for Jharkhand within a day, Union Minister, Subodh Kant Sahay, said here today. "The UPA will decide who will be the new Chief Minister of Jharkhand within the next 24 hours," he told reporters minutes after incumbent Chief Minister, Arjun Munda, announced his resignation before the confidence motion was put to vote. Sahay said the UPA did not pull down the government...

**The Times of India, 14 September 2006**

**Zaveri Bazaar bomb planter found guilty**

Mumbai, September 13: A special TADA court on Thursday found Mohammed Shoaib Ghansar guilty of murder and criminal conspiracy in the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case. Accused number nine in the case, Ghansar was one of the 28 persons charged with planting bombs at 13 places in the city. He had been charged under the TADA act. The CBI had contended that Ghansar, who was an associate of absconding main accused Tiger Memon, drove a RDX-laden scooter to the crowded Zaveri Bazaar in South Mumbai, resulting in the death of 17 persons...

**The Hindu, 14 September 2006**

**Nuclear programme will continue: Kakodkar**

Bangalore, September 13: The Indian nuclear programme will continue whether or not the deal with the U.S. comes through, Anil Kakodkar, Atomic Energy Commission Chairman and Department of Atomic Energy Secretary, said on Wednesday. He was speaking to presspersons after inaugurating an Emergency Response Centre at the Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research. Dr. Kakodkar said the two countries had held wide-ranging discussions on the modalities of the deal, including discussions with the International Atomic Energy Agency...

**The Indian Express, 14 September 2006**

**India has set up 18 centres to deal with nuclear emergencies?**

Bangalore, September 13: India has set up 18 radiation emergency response centres in different parts of the country to deal with any nuclear emergency which can occur due to an act of terror, nuclear attacks, transportation of nuclear materials and accidents in nuclear facilities. N-deal: Saran heading for talks with Burns. Who makes policy? Sibal, SM Krishna in race for "full" foreign minister PM tells n-scientists: help use the new opportunity The doctor and the scientists The first of these centres " boasting of well-
trained scientific manpower, advanced radiation measuring and monitoring instruments, software and other emergency material " was inaugurated at the Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research here by Atomic Energy Commission chairman Anil Kakodkar...

The Hindu, 16 September 2006

**CBI seeks death penalty for Memons**

Mumbai, September 15: Central Bureau of Investigation prosecutor on Friday C.S. Sharma pressed for the death penalty for the three Memon brothers convicted in the 1993 Mumbai blasts case. On the fourth day of the proceedings in the special TADA court, arguments on the sentencing of the four members of the Memon family — Yakub, Essa, Yusuf and Rubeena — were heard by special judge P.D. Kode...

The Hindu, 16 September 2006

**Black day’ observed in Malegaon; town peaceful**

Mumbai, September 15: Malegaon observed Yaum-e-Siyah or ‘black day’ on Friday, to protest against the four bomb blasts that claimed 31 lives and injured over 100 — mostly those participating in Friday namaz. The power loom town remained peaceful. Over 30,000 people offered the Friday namaz at Bada Kabrastan (graveyard), the scene of three bomb blasts. The congregation was much larger than usual and comprised a large number of children...

The Times of India, 16 September 2006

**Cops on verge of cracking 7/11 case**

New Delhi, September 15: Mumbai cops have told the Centre that they are on the verge of cracking the 7/11 terror attack on suburban trains in the city, expressing confidence that they could be close to wrapping up one of the most extensive probes and widespread manhunts by a police force in India. Mumbai police conveyed their optimism to Union home secretary VK Duggal here on Wednesday, according to sources. High-level intelligence sources in the Capital are inclined to believe this claim, indicating that the Mumbai cops have finally homed in on the suspected bombers. Arrests are likely to be made soon...

The Times of India, 16 September 2006

**Rage over Pope remarks singes India**

New Delhi, September 15: The fury over papal remarks on Islam reached India on Friday with protests erupting at several places and Delhi Jama Masjid's shahi imam calling for an apology from the pontiff. As Muslims shouted angrily in Srinagar and Lucknow, Imam Syed Ahmed Bukhari called Pope Benedict XVI's remarks on Islamic teachings as "violent". Using the platform of Friday prayers, he issued a veiled warning to Western powers, especially the US and the UK, against provoking yet another inter-religion war. "Don't push the world towards an other battle-ground," Bukhari said...
Navy to have second base near Vizag

Vishakapatnam, September 16: The Indian Navy has set in motion efforts to set up a futuristic base between Rambilli and Elamanchili mandals, about 50 km south of Visakhapatnam. It has become imperative for the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) to have a new base as the existing channel of Visakhapatnam port shared by the Navy and the port is narrow and crowded...

TRS to pull out of UPA on September 23

Hyderabad, September 16: Setting at rest speculation about mediatory efforts to make him reconsider his decision, Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) president K. Chandrasekhar Rao has categorically stated that he will show up before Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee on September 23 to authenticate his letter of resignation as Member of Parliament. He would also call on President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam the same day to hand over a letter withdrawing the party's support to the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government...

Army must stay: J&K Governor

New Delhi, September 16: Jammu and Kashmir Governor Lt. Gen. (retd.) S.K. Sinha on Saturday ruled out demilitarisation in the State even if normality returns. He also defended the human rights record of the Army in counter-insurgency operations, and felt it operated with greater restraint than the armies in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan (Baluchistan). Gen. Sinha said Islamabad's demand for self-rule and withdrawal of security forces from the State was misplaced...

"Hindutva" still influences politics in some regions: U.S. report

Washington: "Hindutva" continues to influence government policies and societal attitudes in some regions at the State and local levels in India despite the United Progressive Alliance Government's rejection of the ideology, says a U.S. Government report. The U.S. State Department's annual report on religious freedom worldwide, released here on Friday, however, said, "Hindutva-based policies could not be implemented without passing court review to determine whether they were consistent with the principles enshrined in the country's secular constitution."...

Congress, Left parties welcome move to resume composite talks

New Delhi, September 17: The Congress and the Left parties have welcomed the move to resume composite dialogue with Pakistan, while the Bharatiya Janata Party has advocated "double caution" keeping in mind Pakistan's past record of its actions not matching its commitments. The Congress and the Left also appreciated the India-Pakistan joint statement in Havana that took note of terror attacks on Indian soil and the decision to set up an anti-terror joint mechanism...
"Al-Qaeda involved in Indian plane hijack plot"
Islamabad, September 17: Al-Qaeda operatives were behind the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane in 1999, which culminated in the release of Jaish-e-Mohammed leader Maulana Masood Azhar and two other militants, a former bodyguard of terror mastermind Osama bin Laden has claimed. In a documentary aired on Al Jazeera TV on Saturday, Osama's bodyguard recalled that Osama welcomed Azhar after his release from an Indian jail preceding the hijacking of the plane and threw a lavish party in his honour, Pakistan's online news agency reported...

India well on its way to achieving CFC reduction targets
New Delhi, September 17: India has achieved a 50 per cent target of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) production from 22,558 metric tonnes to 11,294 metric tonnes and consumption from 6,681 metric tonnes to 1,940 metric tonnes. The most critical and important target of production and consumption of another ozone depleting substance used as a cleaning and process agent - Carbon Tetra Chloride (CTC) - has also been achieved by adopting suitable alternative technology for non-feedstock applications of CTC...

Ujjain Prof's case: Police intensify efforts to arrest 4
Ujjain, September 17: Police have intensified their efforts to arrest four persons who were recently identified as accused in the alleged murder of Professor HS Sabharwal, official sources said in Ujjain on Sunday. They are collecting details about the immovable properties of the four persons so that they can be attached, in case they remain elusive, sources said. It was learnt that the CID, which is probing the murder case and has not yet disclosed the identities of the accused officially, had asked the local police to arrest them as early as possible, sources said...

Indo-Pak talks evoke mixed reaction in J&K
Srinagar, September 17: A day after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Pakistan president Pervez Musharraf agreed in Havana to resume talks and set up an anti-terrorism mechanism, the decision evoked mixed responses in Jammu and Kashmir. While several separatist and mainstream leaders welcomed the decision, the common people wanted an end to violence before the proposed talks...While welcoming the move, JKLF chief Yaseen Malik said the talks should lead to a permanent solution to the Kashmir issue...

'93 blasts: Deadliest bomber found guilty
Mumbai, September 19: The Tada court on Tuesday declared as guilty the planter of the RDX-laden jeep at Century Bazaar which killed 113 people, the highest number at a single spot during the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts. More than 150 people were injured in the blast. Abdul GaniTurk, the fourth bomb planter convicted in the trial, faces the death sentence. At about 12.30 pm on Tuesday, judge P D Kode explained the charges under which Turk had been found guilty and announced that his statement on the quantum of
the sentence that he should be given would be heard on Thursday...

The Indian Express, 20 September 2006  
End of the year, India's first hydrogen-dispensing gas station will open in Delhi  
New Delhi, September 19: Five years after New Delhi set the trend by introducing CNG in public transport; it will become the first city to install a hydrogen-dispensing station. By year-end, at least five vehicles already sitting in an Indian Oil Corporation R&D centre will start plying on CNG blended with 10% hydrogen (HCNG) on Delhi's roads. This blend will facilitate the entry of a fuel source that has become the veritable Holy Grail in the quest of a green, zero-emission fuel...

The Times of India, 20 September 2006  
JVs with Mittal firms on track, says ONGC  
New Delhi, September 19: Oil and Natural Gas Corporation on Tuesday said its joint ventures with steel baron Laxmi Mittal's group firms were on track and the state-owned explorer will issue one bonus share for every two scrips in November, taking the equity base to Rs 2,138.90 crore, up from Rs 1,425 crore at present. ONGC has two joint ventures with Mittal group firms. ONGC-Mittal Energy Ltd (OMEL) was formed to acquire and bring to production overseas oilfields...

The Times of India, 20 September 2006  
LEADER ARTICLE: Targeting Muslims  
When a blast claims innocent lives, we, with a fair degree of conviction, point to Islamic militants of whatever ilk, Kashmiri jihadis or desperate groups out to avenge Gujarat. No sooner does an incident takes its toll, the story is laid out threadbare - the organisation and its module that carried out the operation, its link with Pakistan, antecedents of the terrorists involved, their training camp in Jalalabad...

The Indian Express, 21 September 2006  
Hizbul open to Ramzan ceasefire, but wants Delhi to make the move  
Srinagar, September 20: Hours after a Hizbul Mujahideen spokesman in Islamabad offered New Delhi a conditional ceasefire in the Valley during Ramzan starting next week, the militant group’s counterparts in J&K said they were open to the idea if the Indian government takes the initiative. Hizbul’s spokesman Junad-ul-Islam told The Indian Express that the option was open...

Hindustan Times, 21 September 2006  
'93 blasts: Parvez declared guilty  
New Delhi, September 20: A designated TADA court in Mumbai, hearing the 1993 serial bomb blasts case, on Thursday pronounced Parvez Nasir Ahmed Shaikh guilty of multiple charges including causing two explosions at Katha Bazaar and Hotel Sea Rock. Parvez had been charged with parking an RDX-laden scooter on March 12, 1993, at Katha Bazaar in south Mumbai, which exploded killing four people and injuring another 21, besides damaging property worth Rs 37 lakh...
Hindustan Times, 21 September 2006

**No sealings in Delhi today, 32 arrested for violence**

New Delhi, September 20: Delhi's civic authorities said they would not carry out the sealing of illegal commercial units in residential areas on Thursday in view of the "sensitivity" of the issue even as 32 people were arrested for Wednesday's violence in which three people were killed...He said the zonal deputy commissioners were taking stock of the ground situation. According to MCD sources, sealing squads fear a threat to their lives and have refused to step out. Meanwhile, 32 people have been arrested on charges of instigating violence in Seelampur in northeast Delhi during the clash between traders and police on Wednesday that witnessed large scale damage to property...

The Times of India, 21 September 2006

**Article- Live fast, die young**

According to a WHO report, lifestyle disorders are responsible for a startling 40 per cent of deaths in urban India. It's official. No less than 40 per cent of deaths in urban India are due to lifestyle disorders, or so says a WHO report. And those suffering had no clue they had developed it until it was too late. With over 6 million Indians having succumbed to lifestyle disorders in 2005 alone, the medical fraternity predicts that numbers will continue to rise, unless we don't treat this as a wake up call...

The Indian Express, 22 September 2006

**Govt will go to SC today over Delhi sealing drive**

New Delhi, September 21: Rattled by the violence over the Delhi sealing drive which left four persons dead, the Government today suspended sealing operations until September 25 while a Group of Ministers, meeting within hours of being constituted after a Cabinet meet, decided not to confront the judiciary over the issue, at least for now. The Government will file a fresh affidavit in the Supreme Court tomorrow to legalise unauthorised commercial structures under the amended Delhi Master Plan...

Hindustan Times, 22 September 2006

**11/7: Police detain six LeT men for 'executing blasts'**

New Delhi, September 21: After two months of intensive probe into the train blasts in Mumbai, central security agencies and Mumbai police have detained at least six people who were allegedly involved in planning and executing the attacks on July 11. The detained people are allegedly cadres of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba who are suspected to have executed this plan with help from local cadres of the banned SIMI, informed sources said...

The Times of India, 22 September 2006

**Centre pins hopes on anti-Naxal cell**

New Delhi, September 21: Not enthused by results from centralised mechanisms on countering the spread of Naxalism, Centre feels the dedicated anti-Naxal cell in Union home ministry will provide it a toehold in states for direct monitoring. With New Delhi keeping a direct tab on states, laggard states may be forced to implement security and economic measures they have failed to take up to check the Naxal menace...
The Times of India, 23 September 2006

**PM warns of more fidayeen attacks**

Nainital, September 23: Describing as 'worrisome' the activities of externally-sponsored terror groups, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Saturday warned of a spurt in suicide attacks targeting religious, economic and sensitive institutions in the country. He termed as disconcerting reports that suggest the existence of a number of terrorist modules and sleeper cells in some urban areas which provide the backup for foreign terrorist outfits...

Hindustan Times, 23 September 2006

**Editorial- Cooking up an identity crisis**

September 23: Give them a loophole and they will, to mix metaphors, take a mile. The passing of the Gujarat Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Bill, 2006, earlier this week, is a consequence of loophole-hunters within the state’s ruling party deciding to play identity politics. According to the existing Gujarat Freedom of Religion Bill, 2003, a person wishing to convert to another religion will be required to inform the local district magistrate of the conversion, who will then verify the procedure...

The Times of India, 25 September 2006

**Most Indians favour better ties with US**

Washington, September 24: Seventy percent of Indians believe relations between their country and the US have improved in recent years and those who think so overwhelmingly consider this a good thing. On the other hand, 43 per cent Pakistanis say Indo-US relations have become better, and they are divided over whether this is a positive development, according to a Washington based research centre's survey of global attitudes...

The Indian Express, 25 September 2006

**For CPM, supporting UPA govt is no longer a matter of debate**

New Delhi, September 24: Setting to rest fears about the stability of the UPA government because of Left pressures and the shadow of an emerging ‘third alternative’, the CPI(M) has said in an official party document that despite its differences with the UPA on key issues, support to the Manmohan Singh government was no longer a matter of debate. The CPI (M)’s political organisational report, finalised by the Politburo in Kolkata earlier this month and presented to the Central Committee here today, says neither the party nor the Left combination had been able to muster secular parties to come under joint platforms...

The Indian Express, 25 September 2006

**Army resumes operations, ULFA imposes ‘tax’**

Guwahati, September 24: Less than six hours of the outlawed United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) gunning down the manager of a tea estate in Upper Assam, the army resumed operations against the militant group across the state while the ULFA announced, for the first time, that everybody in Assam would have to pay “tax” to the outfit. The operations resumed exactly after a month of an informal ceasefire between New Delhi and the ULFA that began on August 23, during which the rebel group repeatedly refused to respond positively to the government’s request for a written letter
expressing its willingness to sit for talks...

Hindustan Times, 25 September 2006

Farmers weigh heavily on UPA Govt's conscience
New Delhi/Nagpur, September 24: When things got a bit heated during the 10-hour discussion on agriculture at the Congress chief ministers' conclave in Nainital on Saturday, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh intervened to say that he would "look into" the issues of agricultural credit and indebtedness that had been raised. Maharashtra Chief Minister Vilasrao Deshmukh said the prime minister's relief package to debt-ridden farmers had brought some respite to farmers in Vidarbha...

Hindustan Times, 26 September 2006

Editorial- So far, so good
September 25: Though the Congress party’s Nainital conclave was billed as a meeting of Chief Ministers belonging to the party, it turned out to be a good occasion to display the sound political health of the UPA coalition that governs the country. The positions taken by its leaders on questions ranging from anti-terrorism strategy to agriculture indicate that the UPA in mid-term is at peace with itself, and has begun shifting gears so as to pick up even greater impetus in the coming years. Whether the issue is tackling the agrarian crisis or terrorism and Naxalism, it is increasingly clear that the lack of effective coordination among state governments is a major hindrance in the way of implementing policies...

Hindustan Times, 26 September 2006

Editorial- Status quo ante in Assam
September 25: The turn of events in Assam suggests the North-eastern state could be in for another round of turmoil. Close on the heels of the government ending its six-week truce with the United Liberation Front of Asom (Ulfa) last Sunday, the army has reportedly resumed its operations against the rebels. The express reason for New Delhi calling off the ceasefire seems to be last Friday’s rebel attacks on a police patrol near Dibrugarh, which were followed by the killing of a tea plantation manager after a failed extortion attempt. The Ulfa had unleashed a series of explosions targeting oil and gas pipelines, railway tracks, road bridges and telecom facilities this year, until New Delhi stopped military operations against them last month, overruling the sceptical security forces leadership...

Hindustan Times, 26 September 2006

Playing it clean
September 25: Nearly 20 years ago, film star Amitabh Bachchan took on political stalwart Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna on battlefield Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh. Bahuguna was scornful of his rival, calling him by a typically local word ‘nachaniya’ (street dancer). To even imagine that Allahabad would vote for an actor was insulting its electorate’s intelligence was Bahuguna’s take. But Bachchan drew the crowds. He had a ready script and his lines were rehearsed. When he spoke, his baritone made the crowds hysterical; when he spoke about how he had carried Indira Gandhi’s body in his arms, women wailed...
Mumbai ’93: Five cops held guilty
Mumbai, September 26: The special TADA court hearing the 1993 serial blasts case on Tuesday held five policemen, including a sub-inspector and four constables, guilty of allowing Tiger Memon’s men to smuggle in arms, ammunition and explosives, used to trigger the blasts in Mumbai on March 12 that year. Three other constables were acquitted of the same charges. Special Judge Pramod Kode held that accused No 116, suspended police sub-inspector Vijay Patil, was the main conspirator and took all the important decisions while the others just helped him...

Jessica: How evidence was destroyed
Mumbai, September 26: When he tries, Shyan Munshi — prime witness in the Jessica Lal murder case — can speak good Hindi, good enough to give him the confidence to go for a role in an 'Indo-British production'; he can even show off the differences between Mumbaiya Hindi and Delhi Hindi and Urdu and Hindi. Karan Rajput, another witness who did his bit to swing things for prime accused Manu Sharma and company in court, died last year. But his nephew, Jitender Raj (who worked in Tamarind Court as a waiter), friend Surinder and landlord Rajbir Singh are there, vouching for the fact that Karan — before he died of cirrhosis of the liver — got money, to the tune of Rs 25 lakh, from the Sharmas...

Terror gets its first death punishment: Oct 20 for Afzal
New Delhi, September 26: A sessions court today ordered that Mohammad Afzal, convicted in the December 13, 2001 Parliament attack case, be executed on October 20. Tihar Jail authorities said the execution, the first in 17 years, will be carried out once they receive formal orders. A Rashtrapati Bhavan spokesman said no mercy petition had been received. Special POTA Court judge ASJ Ravinder Kaur today formally issued what is referred to as the black warrant...The order stated that Afzal “hang by the neck till death at 0600 hours on October 20, 2006”. After the order, his lawyer said Afzal hasn’t decided yet on a mercy petition but legal experts said he would now need the court’s permission to do so...

Centre blocks Ulfa escape routes
New Delhi, September 26: Apprehending Ulfa's attempt to use Indo-Bhutan border as an 'escape route' during ongoing military operations against the outfit, the Centre on Tuesday rushed additional paramilitary personnel to the region and asked the neighbouring country to intensify vigilance on its side. Though there is no input suggesting any Ulfa camp in the area, the move is intended to choke the routes which insurgents may take to escape the offensive launched against them on Sunday...

In join-army ads, force sells good life over patriotism
New Delhi, September 26: When the army has to compete with the likes of
PricewaterhouseCoopers, patriotism does not sell — a good life does. Which is why the Indian Army's new recruitment advertisement being beamed on television since early September has a uniformed officer, in the backdrop of sylvan surroundings and sprawling golf courses, inviting young men to join the Indian Army...Grappling with a shortage of over 11,000 officers, the world's second largest army has decided to change its unique selling proposition for recruiting young officers — from patriotism and courage to a good life...