

The Hindu, 1 September 2006

Crisis hits Congress-PDP alliance in J&K

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir's coalition Government was rocked on Thursday by rumblings within the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which summarily removed Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Hussain Baigh from the post of its Legislature Party Leader with a view to depriving him of his position in the Cabinet. On a day of surprise political developments, the PDP, which partners the Congress in the coalition, first sought the shifting of Mr. Baigh from the key portfolios of Finance and Law. Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, who belongs to the Congress, refused to do so..

Daily Excelsior, 1 September 2006

4 militants among 8 killed

Srinagar, Aug 31 : Four militants, including three Pakistan nationals, and three security personnel were among eight people killed in Kashmir since last evening, an official spokesman said today. A major tragedy was averted when the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel today detected and defused a powerful Improvised Explosive Device (IED) on the Srinagar-Jammu national highway planted to target convoy of security forces..A CRPF spokesman said personnel of CRPFs 155 battalion noticed some suspicious article lying on a roadside at Doonipora Bijbehara on the highway this morning. They found a transistor fitted with electronic detonators and two Kg of explosive..

Indian Express, 1 September 2006

NHRC seeks govt comments on J&K killings

New Delhi, August 31: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought comments from the Union Defence secretary over the killing of three civilians in Kupwara district of Jammu and Kashmir. Taking suo-motu cognisance of a newspaper report which said three civilians were mistakenly killed by Army personnel in Kupwara, the Commission observed that if news item were true, it raised a serious matter of violation of human rights of citizens..

Daily Excelsior, 1 September 2006

Opinion: J&K needs balanced, equitable development (Nawang Rigzin Jora)

The relevance of Development as an instrument of change particularly to build on peace dividends is widely recognized. I am reminded of one of the speeches made by Mr. Kofi Annan in UN General Assembly in which he observed that insurgency is not specific or directly related to any religion or region but is an outcome or a manifestation of Development or Governance deficit. Long years of misery and devastation in the State only vindicate such an assertion. The gaps in development, particularly the performance-potential gaps, therefore, need to be addressed sooner than later. It is my firm belief that only inclusive, participatory and equitable models of development can ensure sustainability of any change effort..

Kashmir Times, 1 September 2006

Editorial: Missing count of disappearances

.. The figures quoted by various chief ministers and other ministers have revealed that the total number of disappeared persons could be anywhere between 30 and 3900. Officially, some of these figures have been doled out on the floor of the state legislature, which amounts to misleading the house and breach of privilege. If simply recent figures are to be taken into account, chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad has made a statement on the floor of the house that 12 cases of custodial disappearances have taken place between 2003 and 2006..The government in recent years started a policy that if family members were willing to accept that the missing persons were dead, they would be offered compensation. While some accepted the offer, this bait has not diminished the enthusiasm of the APDP, an organization that maintains that money does not matter but it is their right to know what happened to their sons, husbands and brothers..

Kashmir Times, 2 September 2006

Mirwaiz hopes for positive steps by Manmohan, Musharraf

Srinagar, Sep 1: Expressing the hope that Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Pakistan President General Parvez Musharraf would take concrete steps in solving the Kashmir issue once for all, the chairman of Hurriyat Conference (A) Mirwaiz Umar Farooq today said that the conglomerate would extend its hand in solving this issue through the process of dialogue..Delivering his Friday sermon at Jamia Masjid here, Mirwaiz said that the changes taking place on the world horizon are leading to a situation where all the outstanding issues are being solved by way of dialogue, parleys and reconciliation. He added that both India and Pakistan should follow the same course of action and take meaningful steps in solving the Kashmir issue..

Kashmir Times, 2 September 2006

Editorial: Toothless NHRC

The National Human Rights Commission has finally taken cognizance of an incident of killing of three civilians by the security forces in Kupwara last month. However, the belated response does not imbue the kind of optimism it should. The NHRC has relied on certain news reports and aptly reacted to the situation. But the manner in which the Commission has handpicked a few cases in recent years in Jammu and Kashmir and asked the security forces to explain their position raises eyebrows. Some of the cases of human rights violations earlier taken up by the Commission have yet not yielded in final reports..

Daily Excelsior, 2 September 2006

Cong distances from political crisis in PDP

Srinagar, Sept 1 : A day after Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) demanded removal of its leader Muzaffar Hussain Baig as Deputy Chief Minister, Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad sat tight on the development while the Central Congress while distancing itself from the political crisis in PDP indicated it has no problems with a new nominee to be nominated by the coalition partner..

Daily Excelsior, 2 September 2006

Ex-Ministers bail plea deferred

Srinagar, Sept 1: A court here today deferred till September five the proceedings on bail applications of 10 accused, including two former Ministers and a Deputy Superintendent of Police arrested in connection with the sex scandal that rocked the State. Principal District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Yaqoob Mir deferred the proceedings on the bail applications of former ministers G A Mir and Raman Mattoo, DSP Mohammad Ashraf and Mehraj-ud-Din Malik citing hearing of the case by Supreme Court on September 4 as the reason for the deferment..

Indian Express, 2 September 2006

Edit: Tale of two Ghulams

PDP gets its way in Srinagar over Beig but it comes at a high price: the loss of the CMs authority The kerfuffle in Srinagar, which grew into a full-blown crisis, appears to have been defused for now. The PDP has been successful in its bid to replace deputy chief minister and leader of its legislature party, Muzaffar Hussein Beig, with its new favourite, Ghulam Hassan Mir. The Congress high command obviously came to the conclusion that fighting to protect Ghulam Nabi Azads chief ministerial authority was not worth the risk of destabilising the Congress-PDP coalition government in Jammu and Kashmir..

Daily Excelsior, 3 September 2006

After Laden, Hafeez CDs recovered in Poonch

Jammu, Sept 2: Few days after the recovery of Al-Qaeda supremo Osama bin Ladens provocative CDs from village Gursai in Mendhar tehsil of Poonch district from an encounter site, security forces have now seized CDs of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) chief Hafeez Sayeed from the possession of another group of infiltrators in the same district. Sayeed, who is presently operating as chief of Jamaat-ud-Dawa after the LeT was banned by the United States as well as Pakistan, is currently in jail. Few days back, he was ordered to be released by Lahore High Court but was again taken into custody by the police..

Greater Kashmir, 3 September 2006

Opinion: Coalition compulsion (Nissar Bhat)

Compulsion in coalition government is nothing new. Expansion or reshuffle of cabinets in coalition governments generally serves two purposes to the ruling parties: Firstly it helps them to keep their allies in good humor and secondly it serves as an essential tool to sustain the alliances. Azad led coalition governments recent expansion of its council of ministers, effected about ten months after Azad held the reins of the state, by and large seems a step towards that end. Though for ten months Azad sounded comfortable with his slim cabinet, an expansion now seemed the only way to atrophy the growth of a third front which grapevine had, was posing to emerge on the political horizon in Kashmir..

The Hindu, 3 September 2006

Beigh resigns as Deputy Chief Minister of J&K (Shujaat Bukhari)

Srinagar: The three-day stalemate over distribution of portfolios in the coalition Government of Jammu and Kashmir ended on Saturday, with senior Peoples Democratic

Party (PDP) leader Muzaffer Hussain Beigh resigning from the post of Deputy Chief Minister. His party recalled him from the Council of Ministers on August 31. Mr. Beigh said at a press conference that his aim was not to destabilise the coalition Government or harm the party..

Indian Express, 3 September 2006

Valley isolated, thousands stranded

Srinagar, September 3: Kashmir valley remained cut off from the rest of the country for the third consecutive day on Sunday as traffic on the Srinagar-Jammu and Srinagar-Leh National Highways remained suspended due to landslides, stranding over 2,000 passengers. The traffic on the 300-km Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, the only surface link between Kashmir valley and rest of the country, was suspended on Friday following landslides between Ramban and Ramsu, a road stretch of 23 kms, a traffic department spokesperson said..

Daily Excelsior, 4 September 2006

Maj among 2 soldiers killed

Srinagar, Sept 3: Two soldiers of Rashtriya Rifles, including a Major, are believed to have died in a fierce gunbattle at Ayatmulla village in Bandipore area of Baramulla district this evening. Informed sources told the Excelsior that troops of RR 57 Bn and SOG Baramulla launched a cordon-and-search operation over a specific information at Chak Rishipora on Bandipora-Ahamsharif Road last evening. According to the tip off, at least three militants were hiding in the village. During the operation, militants opened intensive gunfire and managed to escape towards the nearby village of Ayatmulla. In exchange of gunfire early this morning, a private school-teacher, Mohammad Illyas Wani S/o Mohammad Maqbool Wani, sustained injuries..

Kashmir Times, 4 September 2006

Editorial: The crisis blows over

For a couple of days the government of the highly sensitive state of J&K was in the grip of a crisis. Even on Saturday it appeared as if the PDP was going to pull out of the present coalition, forcing the Congress to either seek the support of the NC, or to recommend the dissolution of the present legislature and a midterm poll. Apparently, the cause of the crisis was the senior PDP leader and the DyCM and finance minister in the present government, Muzaffar Husain Beig. Both under Mufti Mohammed Sayeed and then under Ghulam Nabi Azad he has made a name for himself as an efficient minister for such important departments, like finance, planning, law and parliamentary affairs..Both, his party, the PDP, suddenly decided to clip his wings and asked the CM to transfer the portfolio of finance from him to his party colleague, Tariq Hamid Qarra..

Greater Kashmir, 4 September 2006

Highway closed for third day

Jammu: The Srinagar-Jammu highway on the third consecutive day remained closed for vehicular traffic despite repeated attempts by the Beacon authorities to clear the landslides at different places. The Superintendent of Police Traffic (Highway) Suresh Kumar Sharma said continuous rains on Saturday night caused slides and blockade of the

highway at Samroli, Dranthal, Nasri, Peera, Shan Palace, Seeri, Kela More and Batteri Chashma. He said the slides were cleared at all the places except Panthihal where shooting stones made clearing work difficult..

Greater Kashmir, 4 September 2006

CM nominates ministers to monitor situation

Srinagar, Sept 3: Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad Sunday nominated his various cabinet colleagues to monitor emerging flood situation in the state and oversee rescue and relief operations in the affected areas. The chief minister also directed for round- the-clock vigil in all district control rooms, sub-divisions and tehsils of the state. He also called for maintaining close coordination with the Army and the Air Force authorities to meet any eventuality in connection with the possible evacuation of marooned population. PHE Irrigation and Flood Control Minister Muhammad Dilawar Mir, Housing and Urban Development Minister Tariq Hameed Karra and Power Minister Nawang Rigzin Jora have been nominated for Srinagar district..

Indian Express, 4 September 2006

PDP works on a patch-up as Beig puts in papers (Muzaffar Raina)

Srinagar, September 3: The week-long crisis in the Jammu and Kashmir coalition government ended today after Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Hussain Beig submitted his resignation to Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad. Yes, I have submitted my resignation to the CM, Beig said. Meanwhile, Azad said he will accept the PDP's new nominee for the post. Once the PDP sends me a name, he will be sworn in, Azad said. However, he quickly added that it was his duty to see which person was suited for a particular portfolio..

Daily Excelsior, 5 September 2006

SC shifts trial of 14 accused to Chandigarh

New Delhi, Sept 4: With no lawyer in Srinagar willing to defend the 14 accused persons, including two former Ministers and some senior police officers and bureaucrats, in Srinagar sex scandal, the Supreme Court today while pulling up Kashmir Bar Association for vague and irresponsible allegation, shifted the trial to Chandigarh in the interest of justice. On examination of facts and circumstances, we are of the view that the investigations have been completed and chargesheets filed. It would be in the interest of justice to transfer these cases for trial and other proceedings from the court of Principal Sessions Judge, Srinagar, to District and Sessions Judge, Chandigarh, a bench comprising Chief Justice Y K Sabharwal and Justice C K Thakker said.. While transferring the case, the Court noted that CBI did not oppose the petitions moved by the accused..

The Hindu, 5 September 2006

J&K Bar Association pulled up

New Delhi: During the trial of the Srinagar sex scandal on Monday, the Supreme Court pulled up the Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association for saying it would show the entire world the real face of India in Kashmir Expressing shock over the press release, a Bench of Chief Justice Y.K. Sabharwal and Justice C.K. Thakker told counsel for the Bar Association: It is a matter of shame and an irresponsible statement. In no other

democracy will such statements be entertained. Please dont bring in politics. Keep the judiciary away from these issues..

Kashmir Times, 5 September 2006

Political crisis blown over in J&K with Beigs resignation

Srinagar, Sep 4: The political crisis in Jammu and Kashmir seem to have blown over for the time being with the resignation of outgoing Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Hussain Beig from the state Cabinet yesterday as desired by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). Sources said, Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad has forwarded Beigs resignation to Governor Lt Gen (Retd) S K Sinha for formal acceptance..

Indian Express, 5 September 2006

Edit: Blot on lawyers

As the apex court shifts J&K sex scam case out of the state, Srinagars bar association must introspect. It was an unprecedented situation that demanded an unprecedented response. The Supreme Court had no alternative but to shift the trial of the 14 accused in the Jammu and Kashmir sex abuse scandal from a Srinagar sessions court to one in Chandigarh, given the intransigent, unrepentant and wholly misguided stand of the Srinagar Bar Association.. But as these columns have argued, any credible criminal justice system would first entail the constitutional requirement of establishing guilt and it is precisely this crucial process that the lawyers in Srinagar had attempted to subvert. By playing judge, jury and executioner, they have brought disrepute not just to themselves but their profession..

Daily Excelsior, 5 September 2006

4 soldiers among 8 killed

Srinagar, Sept 4: While two brothers, including a Havildar of JAK LI, were gunned down by suspected militants in Tangmarg and the overnight operation at Ayatmulla in Bandipore ended with the death of three soldiers and two militants, Government has ordered a magisterial inquiry into a custodial killing at SOG camp Bandipore today. Meanwhile, sources in Bandipore said that the overnight operation of RR 57 Bn ended at Ayatmulla village when two soldiers had died in the initial round of the firing last evening..

Daily Excelsior, 5 September 2006

Editorial: Delight or despair?

Four flood-related photographs in this newspaper on Monday tell the same tale but in its varied dimensions. One is of Har ki Pauri, a replica of much-revered ancient place of worship of the same name in Haridwar, at the foothills of the Bahu fort in this city nearly submerged in Tawi waters. The other is of a person carrying his child through deep waters in their colony in the Summer Capital. The third is of people excitedly watching rising waters from the Tawi bridge. Yet another picture depicts a mighty Chinar having lost its roots to fall on a houseboat in Jhelum river damaging it partially. It is seldom that one event invites so much attention. There is no alternative when the scene is really bad. Quite a few persons have lost their lives.

Daily Excelsior, 6 September 2006

Most wanted ultra Billoo Gujjar shot dead

Jammu, Sept 5: Police and Army last night achieved a major success when they gunned down most wanted and longest surviving militant of Hizbul Mujahideen, Billoo Gujjar, in an encounter at village Mangal Kundi in Dalwa area of Gool under the jurisdiction of Ramban police district. Mohd Rafeeq alias Wasim alias Billoo Gujjar son of Malik Gujjar, a resident of Sumbar, Ramban and a deputy divisional commander of Hizbul Mujahideen, who had let loose a reign of terror in parts of Ramban, Banihal and Doda for last 15 years was eliminated by police in the in early hours of this morning, DIG Udhampur-Doda range Lalatendu Mohanty said..

Daily Excelsior, 6 September 2006

Editorial: Blow for justice

The Supreme Court has dealt a blow for justice by shifting the trial of 14 accused in Srinagars high-profile sex scandal to Chandigarh. This will come as a major relief to those who feel that they have been wrongly implicated. A person is innocent till proved guilty is a universally accepted statement. The least an accused deserves is an opportunity to let his or her side of the story to be known. The accused were being denied this minimum opportunity in the Summer Capital with no lawyer prepared to turn up for them..The Bar Association had charged the countrys premier investigating agency with disobeying the High Court order and shielding the high and mighty. It could not answer the Courts specific query as to which of the high official of the CBI was withholding consent for arrest..

Kashmir Times, 6 September 2006

Editorial: Delayed response

The flood threat is gradually ebbing and that may be good news for all those people affected by last weeks heavy downpour resulting in submerged villages and urban localities in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly the Valley. The Centre has also announced, without much delay, a package of Rs 89 crores relief for the flood affected people. However, the initial response of the state administration was both tardy and replete with confusion. Though efforts were made to rescue the people marooned in the submerged areas, the panic reaction with every VVIP visiting the flood affected area, which may not be a requirement of disaster management, does not seem to have been very helpful..

The Tribune, 6 September 2006

Editorial: Anything for justice

Right from the start, the Jammu and Kashmir sex scandal was unfolding in such a way that there were grave doubts whether a free and fair trial would be possible. To begin with, the senior positions that the accused occupied in government and in social life made sure that they evaded thorough scrutiny. Later, the violence that erupted against the crime shifted the pendulum to the other extreme, with the accused failing to get any lawyer and even facing threat to life. Under the circumstances, the Supreme Court no choice but to shift the case to Chandigarh. Such transfer of a trial outside a state is a rare occurrence but there are several instances of this..

Daily Excelsior, 7 September 2006

Settle Kashmir to improve Indo-Pak ties: Musharraf

Islamabad, Sept 6: Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has said the settlement of the Kashmir issue with India would end the cycle of confrontation and conflict in the subcontinent and improve ties between the two countries..Asserting that he was committed to the peace process and it would continue with its endeavours in this direction, he said his proposal of demilitarisation of Kashmir and self-governance for people of the region with a joint management arrangement were a clear manifestation of this..

Kashmir Times, 7 September 2006

Editorial: Right to be defended

While making biting comments on the conduct of the Kashmir Bar Association, the Supreme Court of India, on Monday, September 4, transferred the trial of 14 out of the 18 accused in the sex-scandal case from Srinagar to Chandigarh. This may not be a very happy situation. But the unwilling hand of the Supreme Court had been forced by the decision of the Kashmir Bar Association not to defend any of the accused in the aforesaid case. In fact, not only they refused to defend any of them, they also saw to it that defence advocates from Jammu and elsewhere were physically threatened with dire consequences to return their briefs. This amounted to denying the accused the right to be heard, which is unethical and against democratic judicial norms and principal of natural justice..

Daily Excelsior, 7 September 2006

2 militants killed, one held

Srinagar, Sept 6: Security forces killed two militants and apprehended another while ultras shot at and wounded an auto-rickshaw driver in Kashmir today. SOG Badgam and troops of 2 RR shot at a militant during an encounter at Check-e-Charatram village in Kunzar area of Badgam early today. A Sub Inspector of SOG was injured in the operation. The injured militant identified as Farooq Ahmed Rather son of Ghulam Ahmed R/o Khonchipora, Tangmarg, who was a wanted militant of Hizbul Mujahideen has been arrested from the spot..

Indian Express, 7 September 2006

We will not destabilise Azad govt: Omar

Srinagar, September 6: Asserting that Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) had been exposed during the recent political crisis in Jammu and Kashmir's coalition government, Opposition National Conference on Wednesday demanded the regional party respond to former Deputy CM Muzaffar Hussain Baig's statements. Baig has said there was not much of a difference between PDP's self-rule demand and autonomy demand of National Conference and advised PDP to join National Conference, NCP President Omar Abdullah told reporters in Srinagar..

The Tribune, 7 September 2006

Cop having links with terrorists held

Jammu, September 6: A head constable of the Jammu and Kashmir police was today arrested for his alleged links with terrorists who masterminded attack on temple at

Ayodhya last year. In another success, the police arrested four persons and seized 2 kg of brown sugar from them at Bhatindi on the outskirts of the city. The arrested persons were allegedly engaged in printing fake currency. The head constable, Mohammad Sharief, was arrested in the border district of Rajouri on specific information that he had links with the Pakistani terrorists.

Daily Excelsior, 8 September 2006

Militants take away twin murder accused from judicial custody

Srinagar, Sep 7: High drama was witnessed at the premises of District Court in Pulwama today as the militants of Lashkar-e-Toiba managed the escape of their colleague, Mohammad Altaf Malik alias Pinto Malik of Littar, from judicial custody in a meticulously planned and executed operation. Pinto has been facing charges of kidnapping and killing Ircon engineer Sudhir Kumar Pundeer and his brother, Sandeep Kumar, in June 2004. Eyewitnesses told the Excelsior that the handcuffed Lashkar-e-Toiba militant, Altaf Malik alias Pinto Malik of Littar, grappled with a Police constable and attempted to escape when a number of the detainees relatives and colleagues were enjoying a luncheon meeting with him on the court premises..

Kashmir Times, 8 September 2006

Protests in Srinagar over inadequate relief

Srinagar, Sep 7: While the water level of river Jhelum was receding sharply at Sangam, it was flowing slightly higher than the danger mark at Ram Munshi Bagh. The river was flowing six feet below danger mark at Sangam and some centimeters above the danger mark at Ram Munshi Bagh this evening. However, the level of river at Asham was two feet above danger mark. The ground floors of the residential houses at Pamposh Colony, Nund Reshi Colony and Boatman Colony here continue to be under water..The demonstrators alleged that lack of medical facilities is bound to cause epidemic. Meanwhile demonstrations were also held at Soopshali Kokernag, Duchni Kund, Gana Har, and Moongipora against the lack of relief..

Daily Excelsior, 8 September 2006

Opinion: Minor scuffle in Kashmir politics (Arun Nehru)

Politics rarely takes a holiday and events in Kashmir are of interest as there is a minor scuffle for control and clearly it did not succeed. The ground reality in Kashmir is that as elections approach the PDP is under pressure from the NC in the Valley and in Jammu the BJP are ahead of the Congress. Kashmir is not easy to govern and despite good and effective governance by Mufti and then by Ghulam Nabi Azad the anti incumbency factor will help the NC in the Valley and the BJP in Jammu. The NC and the charismatic Farooq Abdullah is extremely active and cannot be written off and whilst son Omar runs the show he clearly lacks the warmth and approach necessary for a mass leader..

Indian Express, 8 September 2006

Top Al-Badr militant killed in J&K

Jammu, September 7: Security forces on Thursday gunned down a militant belonging to Al-Badr outfit in an encounter in Jammu and Kashmirs Rajouri district, a Defence spokesman said in Jammu. Acting on a specific information, a joint team of Rashtriya

Rifle (RR) and Special Operation Group (SOG) of police launched an operation at Khund on Wednesday night. In the subsequent encounter, the militant was killed at around 0430 hours, he said. An AK rifle along with its four magazines and a mobile phone were recovered from the slain militant, identified only as Qasim, a foreign mercenary, the spokesman said..

Greater Kashmir, 8 September 2006

Opinion: The art of negotiations (Dr Mirza Ashraf Beg)

..United Nations too has accepted the fact that Kashmir dispute has three parties, the government of India, the government of Pakistan and the people of Jammu & Kashmir. History is witness that there have been parleys in the past that led to Simla Accord between India and Pakistan and Kashmir Accord between India and the then Kashmiri leadership. The fact that neither Kashmiri leadership objected Simla agreement nor did Pakistan government challenge the Kashmir accord (barring a token strike in the valley) lends support to the argument that all the three parties were in consonance with each other. Besides that the supporters of Kashmir accord claim that people of Jammu & Kashmir endorsed the accord by voting back its solicitors in 1977 elections, defeating all the pro accession and other forces in the process..

Indian Express, 9 September 2006

Flood victims injured in protests

Srinagar, September 8: Police fired tear gas and used bamboo sticks Friday to disperse nearly 600 angry flood victims protesting inadequate food and water supplies in Kashmir, police said. At least eight civilians and three policemen were injured as the protesters blocked a highway into Srinagar, Kashmir, and hurled rocks at police, said Qazi Shamas, a police officer. Chanting slogans like Down with the government! the villagers complained that thousands of people hit by monsoon floods were yet to get food and drinking water. Heavy monsoon rains claimed at least 10 lives over the weekend, and marooned hundreds of villages for several days..Basharat Ahmed, divisional commission of the Kashmir Valley, said officials have been trying to meet demands for food supplies..

Kashmir Times, 9 September 2006

Editorial: A failed agenda

Going by the figures doled out by the Jammu and Kashmir government in respect of recruitment of people under SRO-43 in various departments, it appears the authorities have still a long way to go for providing employment to the next of kin and kith of victims of militancy. Secondly, the manner in which this policy excludes victims of security forces and families of killed militants amounts to discrimination. Till the recent past, the government claimed to have adjusted hundreds of people against these posts in various parts of the state but still thousands of posts remain vacant and eligible youth waiting for months and years for recruitment. If one goes by the claims of the government only 20 to 25 percent kins of militancy victims have been recruited in various departments..

Daily Excelsior, 9 September 2006

JKP announces reward on militants

Srinagar, Sept 8: The Jammu and Kashmir Police have announced a reward of Rs three lakh on two Pakistani militants involved in killings and other terror acts in the Valley, official sources said today. The reward has been announced on Osama and Bhaijan, both residents of Pakistan, and whom police described as two dreaded militants. Police have also pasted pamphlets in several areas of the summer capital, particularly at bus stands, informing the general public about the Rs three lakh reward..

Daily Excelsior, 9 September 2006

Editorial: Plug loopholes

To say that there has been a serious security lapse leading to the escape of a Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) terrorist from the district court premises in Pulwama will be stating the obvious. This is not the first time that such an incident has taken place. Militants have managed to flee from jails. At times they have dispossessed the policemen of their arms and ammunition.. A LeT militant accused of killing a Railway engineer Sudhir Kumar Pundeer and his brother is taken all the way from the Srinagar Central Jail to Pulwama along with three other detainees for a court appearance. As it normally happens in our dispensation he is met by his relatives and friends in the court compound. There is not only an exchange of greetings but also a luncheon meeting. The detainee is supposed to be handcuffed but the possibility has not been ruled out that his shackles may have been removed..

Greater Kashmir, 9 September 2006

Trans LoC trade taking shape

Srinagar, Sep 8: The Australian High Commissioner in India John McCarthy called on Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad here on Thursday. The Chief Minister while interacting with him said that India has always taken bold initiatives for strengthening peace and developing cordial relations with all its neighbours including Pakistan. He said it is in the interest of both India and Pakistan to live in the atmosphere of peace. He informed the envoy that various steps have been taken for opening of the roads including Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot roads in order to ensure people to people contact..He said that a right message is required to be conveyed to the people of Australia about the state so that tourists visit in large number..

Greater Kashmir, 10 September 2006

Work honestly to book culprits: Court to CBI

Srinagar, Sep 9: The High Court on Saturday directed the CBI to honestly bring the culprits in the sexual abuse case to book. The courts Division Bench comprising Justice Hakim Imtiaz Hussain and Justice Bashir Ahmad Kirmani heard the arguments of the senior counsels of High Court Bar Association (HCBA) and Advocate General. Mian Abdul Qayoom, the Bar president referred to certain portions of recent order of Apex Court and submitted that since it has upheld the order of the High Court dated August 8, the CBI has to conduct the investigation and take steps as directed by this court..

Indian Express, 10 September 2006

Three Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists killed

Jammu, September 10: Security forces have gunned down three Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists in separate encounters in Jammu division, police sources said on Sunday. Police and army troops shot dead a foreign terrorist of LeT outfit at Mathori in Doda district last night, they said, adding the slain terrorist has been identified as Abu Khalid of Sialkote area of Pakistan. One AK rifle with three magazines and five rounds were recovered from the slain terrorist, the sources said. In Poonch district, Special Operation Group of police and Rashtriya Rifle troops launched a search operation in Kasblari area of Mendhar Tehsil on Monday..

Daily Excelsior, 10 September 2006

Complete mega hospitals at Jammu, Srinagar in 18 months: Azad

Srinagar, Sept 9 : With the tremendous pressure on health sector as a result of turmoil and other health related factors, Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad today felt that it was necessary to expand the healthcare facilities to cater to the needs of entire population of Jammu and Kashmir by establishing a network of mega hospitals in the State. Speaking at a high level meeting here today, Mr Azad told in the meeting that Rs 200 crore from Central Government and Rs. 40 crore from State Government have been earmarked for the upgradation of medical colleges of Srinagar and Jammu..

Daily Excelsior, 10 September 2006

Two SPOs shot dead, 6 rifles looted from PP

Jammu, Sept 9: A Special Police Officer (SPO), joined by a surrendered militant, gunned down two SPOs and looted six rifles along with ammunition and a wireless set at Chanyas police post under the jurisdiction of Gandoh police station in Doda district in wee hours of this morning. In two other incidents, a surrendered ultra was gunned down by the militants in Dool area of Kishtwar while security forces eliminated two militants in Kasblari area of Mendhar tehsil in Poonch district. Two Army personnel including a captain were injured in the gunbattle..

Indian Express, 11 September 2006

Police recover 35 kg RDX in J&K

Jammu, September 11: Security forces have recovered a huge cache of arms and explosives, including 35 kgs of RDX, from two terrorist hideouts in Rajouri and Poonch districts of Jammu and Kashmir. In a joint operation by Rashtriya Rifles (RR) troops and police, a natural cave, which was being used as a hideout by terrorists, was raided at Kuth Gali in Thanamandi area of Rajouri district on Sunday, official sources said in Jammu on Monday..

Daily Excelsior, 11 September 2006

Azad: self-rule, demilitarisation are nothing but a stunt

Srinagar, Sept 10: Peoples Democratic Party is likely to nominate Tariq Hameed Qarra as the States new Deputy Chief Minister even as Abdul Aziz Zargar is likely to continue as Legislature Party leader. While a sitting Minister of State is likely to be elevated to the Cabinet rank, party is likely to recommend one of its junior leaders as a Minister of State.

Prospects of induction for Muzaffar Hussain Baig as well as the homecoming Ghulam Hassan Mir appear to be bleak..

Kashmir Times, 11 September 2006

LeT ultra killed in Doda

Jammu, Sep 9: Army and police in a joint operation eliminated a foreign ultra of banned LeT outfit while a jawan also lost his life and another was injured in a gun battle at Mathori in Doda today. In another counter insurgency related incident, security forces and police recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition including over 40 kilograms of deadly RDX from Kuth Gali in Thannamandi area of Rajouri district. In a joint operation 8 RR and Doda police eliminated a foreign ultra of banned LeT outfit at Mathori. However, a jawan also lost his life while another sustained injuries in the encounter. Slain ultra has been identified as Abu Khalid alias Mohammed Babbar Khalid, a native of Chakoti in Pakistan..

Indian Express, 12 September 2006

J&K situation improving', HRW slams Pak

Srinagar, September 12: There is considerable evidence of Pakistans support to militants in Jammu and Kashmir even as the human rights situation in the state has shown improvement since the Congress-PDP government came into power in 2002, a leading New York-based human rights group has said. In its report on the human rights situation in the state, Human Rights Watch said there is considerable evidence that Pakistan has given Kashmiri militants training, weapons, funding and sanctuary over the last many years.. The report said the militants have been responsible for bomb attacks that target civilians. They have attacked religious minorities in Kashmir such as Hindus and Sikhs as well as ethnic minorities such as Gujjars..

Daily Excelsior, 12 September 2006

3 militants, SPO killed; PDP activist shot at

Srinagar, Sept 11: Three militants, including two exfiltrators, and a Special Police Officer were killed and two soldiers injured in separate encounters in Kashmir, where radicals shot at and injured a ruling PDP's worker in Anantnag. The two exfiltrators were killed in a fierce gunbattle near Line of Control in Gurez sector of Baramulla district today, a police spokesman said. Following specific information about the movement of Militants in Baraub village, an ambush was laid by the troops, the spokesman said adding the militants were challenged and in the ensuing gunfight, two ultras were shot dead..

Daily Excelsior, 12 September 2006

Editorial: Irrelevant borders

Outgoing External Affairs Secretary Shyam Saran has once again echoed the nations desire for making borders irrelevant between India and Pakistan. Speaking at a function in the national capital he has asserted: We dot have any barriers. Our motto is: we should be willing to go as far as our neighbour is comfortable. He has rightly pointed out that a flourishing India offers a great opportunity to neighbours, not a threat. There can hardly be two opinions that increased connectivity holds the key to prosperity in the world as a whole and our sub-continent in particular. People all over are yearning for peace. Nothing

drives home this point more effectively than the overwhelming response by ordinary citizens to the reopening of road and rail links between India and Pakistan. It is not a small matter that about two lakh people from both countries have travelled across the Line of Control and Wagah border by buses during the last two years. The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad, Lahore-Amritsar and Amritsar-Nankana Sahib routes have proved a big draw in this behalf..

Kashmir Times, 12 September 2006

Joint deputation of PDD calls on Power Minister

Srinagar, Sep 11: The Government contemplates to regularize the services of daily wagers working in Power Development Department, having 84 wage vouchers and appointment letters of the competent authorities. This was stated by Minister for Power Nawang Rigzin Jora here on Monday, while interacting with joint deputations of J&K Electric Employees Union, Jammu, Non-Gazetted Electric Employees Association and ITI Diploma Holders Association of the Department, who called on him for redressal of their demands. Minister of State for Power Peer Mohammad Hussain was also present on the occasion..

Indian Express, 12 September 2006

CM urges militants for Ramadan truce

Srinagar, September 12: The Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir urged separatist militants in the Himalayan region to stop violence during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan and said the government would match such a truce. Islamist militants in the disputed Himalayan region usually step up attacks against troops during Ramadan, considering it to be an auspicious time to wage jihad or holy war. Ramadan begins in the last week of September this year. Ghulam Nabi Azad, urged militants to end violence in the region, where more than 45,000 people have been killed since the revolt erupted in 1989..

Daily Excelsior, 13 September 2006

Police links IED to Mumbai blasts verdict

Jammu, Sept 12: Describing last night's recovery of a powerful Improvised Explosive Device (IED) near Chest Diseases (CD) Hospital as a matter of concern for Jammu Police, Inspector General of Police, Jammu range, Dr Shesh Pal Vaid said the militants might have planned to cause the blast today co-inciding with the TADA court verdict on 1993 serial blasts in Mumbai in which 257 persons were killed and scores others were injured.. The militant outfit responsible for smuggling the IED into the City here has not been identified so far. The IED was fitted with a Programme Time Device (PTD) but, according to the IGP Jammu, it was not possible to detect timing of the blast. He asserted that the militants wanted to create terror among the civilians by triggering blasts..

Kashmir Times, 13 September 2006

HRW Report accuses India, Pak of impunity to guilty security forces, militants

Srinagar, Sep 12: The latest Human Rights Watch (HRW) report Impunity Fuels Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, released here today, has strongly criticised both the Indian and Pakistani governments for their failure on human rights front which is fueling the cycle of

violence. While the Indian government has been held responsible for inability to end widespread impunity for human rights abuses committed by its security forces, Pakistan has been accused of backing militant groups engaged in alleged acts of atrocities. The report was released by the HRW Asia Director, Brad Adams at a local Hotel here today. This is the first time in the history of on-going turmoil in the valley that any international human rights organisation released any report about the human rights conditions on the soil of Kashmir..

Greater Kashmir, 13 September 2006

Editorial: Better late

Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azads offer to convince New Delhi for a ceasefire against the local militant outfits, in case they ceased hostilities, came close on the heels of 9/11 anniversary, observed world over with varied perspectives. President of National Conference Omar Abdullah also echoed the Chief Minister's desire of restoring peace in Kashmir and urged upon New Delhi to open channels of dialogue with militants especially the indigenous force, Hizbul Mujahideen. The timing of this call from states mainstream leadership could not be a mere coincidence..

Greater Kashmir, 13 September 2006

Govt ignoring GBs: Mian Ataf

Srinagar, Sep 12: Former minister and senior leader of National Conference Mian Altaf Ahmad has accused the coalition government of neglecting the Gujjars and Bakerwals, the third largest ethnic group of Jammu and Kashmir in each and every field of life. In a statement, Altaf said the government has been adopting a calculated attitude to victimize the Gujjar employees working in the state government by ignoring them postings in the important departments. He said only three senior KAS officers and two IPS officers belonging to this downtrodden community are working in the state administration and they too have been posted in the cells, tribunals and other less important departments..

Daily Excelsior, 14 September 2006

Day after HRW report, Geelani admits mistakes by militants

Srinagar, Sept 13: Unexpectedly critical of militants and Pakistan on account of human rights abuse, alongside security forces, Human Rights Watch report has forced the head of the hardline faction of Hurriyat Conference, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, admit that militants too have been committing some mistakes in Jammu and Kashmir. He has contended that any ceasefire, not aimed at finding a solution to the Kashmir dispute, could not prove to be a success in the strife-torn border State..He referred to the ceasefire announcements of 1949, 1965, the Kargil skirmishes of 1999 and other incidents, and asserted that the Kashmir dispute was unresolved and intact..

Indian Express, 14 September 2006

Editorial: A Kashmir ceasefire?

Tuesdays call by the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad for a ceasefire between the security forces and the Kashmiri militants could not have come at a more appropriate moment. Floated just days before the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh meets with Pakistans President Pervez Musharraf in Havana, the proposal has the

potential to transform the political environment in J&K, boost the Indo-Pak peace process and inject new life into the talks between the Centre and the militants. That Azads call received strong support from his political ally and former chief minister, Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, of the Peoples Democratic Party and his main opponent, Omar Abdullah, of the National Conference should not surprise any one. Across the spectrum in J&K, people in the state have been waiting for a big political gesture from New Delhi..

Greater Kashmir, 14 September 2006

Editorial: Refurbishing image

It might have been coincidental or timed - human rights situation in Jammu and Kashmir has once come again come under sharp focus at a time when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Pervez Musharraf are scheduled to meet on sidelines of the Non Aligned Meet in Havana, Cuba. The human rights situation in Jammu and Kashmir has been a subject for many an international rights organization for past more than two decades and there is hardly any organization of repute that has not documented the rights violation in this paradise nestled in the bosom of mighty Himalayas. And many homegrown human rights organization have been pounding their chests at the murder of humanity in this land..

Kashmir Times, 14 September 2006

Mufti to present self-rule proposal to UNGA

New Delhi, Sep 13 : Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed is heading New York to present his self-rule proposal to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) session October first week. He has been invited by the UN office to speak on the sidelines of the annual UNGA session starting in the middle of September. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has skipped the session this year and has nominated Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee to lead official Indian delegation at the UN. He is addressing the UNGA on September 19..

Indian Express, 14 September 2006

Beig retained in PDP top panel revamp

Srinagar, September 13: The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) today reconstituted its highest decision making body, the political affairs committee, following the recent crisis which threatened to split the party. Interestingly, senior party leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Hussain Beig has been retained in the committee. The reconstitution of the panel shows that Beig has retained the third position in the party, said a PDP leader. The party has also nominated four special invitees to its highest decision making body..

Daily Excelsior, 14 September 2006

Jawan gunned down, woman injured

Srinagar, Sept 13 : An Army jawan was gunned down and a woman injured by militants in separate incidents in Anantnag and Baramulla districts of Kashmir, officials said here today. Sepoy Angrez Singh was killed when militants opened fire on a search party of the Rashtriya Rifles at Laamad village of Anantnag district last night, they said. The ultras fled soon after taking advantage of darkness. A massive search operation has been

launched in the area to trace the militants, they said. In a separate incident, militants barged into the house of an ex-serviceman Mohammad Iqbal in Iqbal Nagar area of Sopore of North Kashmir's Baramulla district and fired upon his wife Misra Begum last night..

Daily Excelsior, 15 September 2006

Ultra involved in massacre of 13 killed in Basantgarh

Jammu, Sept 14: A Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) commander involved in the massacre of 13 members of minority community was gunned down by Udhampur police and Army in an encounter at village Lower Punara in Basantgarh area of Udhampur district this afternoon. A Special Police Officer (SPO) and a Village Defence Committee (VDC) member lost their lives while six security personnel including four cops and two Armymen were injured in the gunbattle, which was on till late this evening with a Pakistani militant still holed-up..

Daily Excelsior, 15 September 2006

Separatists welcome in working group: Ansari

Jammu, Sept 14: Stressing on the need of healing wounds of the all those, who have been directly or indirectly, affected by the on-going turmoil, M H Ansari, chairman of the Working Group on Rehabilitation of Militancy Affected People, urged different groups to keep aside their political affiliations and treat this issue as human problem. Although representatives of almost all parties have been involved in this working group yet this problem will not to be discussed on political lines, he said while interacting with media persons, after an hour long interaction with some NGOs..

Daily Exelsior, 15 September 2006

HC asks CBI to produce list of all accused in sex racket

Srinagar, Sept 14: The State High Court, which is monitoring investigations into the sex scandal case here, has termed as vague the list of accused and the line of action proposed by CBI in the case. CBI had submitted a status report containing proposed line of action in the open court. On its perusal, we find it vague in many respects so much so that it neither contains the names of all persons allegedly involved in the case nor does it indicate any precipitated action against those mentioned, a division bench said today..

Kashmir Times, 15 September 2006

Editorial: Double-edged sword

The SPOs (referred to in common parlance as surrendered police officials comprising surrendered militants, are turning into a group of armed nightmares both for their employers and for those -- we mean the public -- for whose ultimate security they are employed. As feared and warned, since their inception, by men with experience and imagination, they have, as the IGP of Jammu has recently admitted, proved themselves to be a double-edged sword. Occasionally they help the police with valuable secret information and leads to justify their new role. Thus they earn the wrath of their former colleagues and become targets of their vengeance along with their family members..

Greater Kashmir, 15 September 2006

Mirwaiz leaves for US

Srinagar: Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, chairman of his faction of Hurriyat Conference, on Thursday left for United States to participate in the 61st special meeting of Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). Mirwaiz, according to a spokesman of the Hurriyat, has been invited by the secretary general of the OICs Kashmir contact group to participate in the meeting of the biggest body of the Muslims. Mirwaiz Umar will raise the issue of human rights violations before the OIC members, the spokesman said, adding that he will stress the need for resolving the Kashmir issue through tripartite talks peacefully..

Greater Kashmir, 15 September 2006

New SHRC chairman

Srinagar: Justice (retd) Muhammad Yaseen Kawoosa on Thursday assumed the charge of chairman J&K State Human Rights Commission, said a handout of the SHRC here Thursday. Meanwhile, Habibullah Bhat, retd District and Sessions Judge has been appointed as member of the SHRC, the handout added..

Kashmir Times, 16 September 2006

Protest in Srinagar, Jammu against Popes remarks

Srinagar, Sep 15: Protest demonstrations were today held across Kashmir Valley in protest against the remarks that the Pope made during his ongoing visit to Germany on Thursday. Senior separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Shabir Ahmad Shah were also placed under house arrest. As Muslim League (ML) chairman Masrat Alam moved out of his residence, he was arrested by police. ML had given a call for the protests across Kashmir today. Hurriyat Conference (G) also took out a protest demonstration from Khankahi Moulla. Led by Ghulam Nabi Sumbji, they were holding demonstrations against the sacrilege act..

Kashmir Times, 16 September 2006

Editorial: Give cease-fire a trial

Chief minister, Ghulam Nabi Azad, sprang a pleasant surprise when, on the anniversary of the bloody 9/11, he announced his intention to declare a cease-fire by the security forces during the month of the Holy Ramzan and to continue it thereafter, as in Nagaland, if only the militants here respond positively to his gesture and to the innermost urge of the people. This is not for the first time that a cease-fire is being suggested or enforced. The first time a short-lived case-fire was experimented with was between 24 July and 8 August 2000, when the HM commander Abdul Majid Dar announced a cease-fire which was followed by talks with the mandarins of Union home ministry..

Indian Express, 16 September 2006

SC quashes Kashmiri militants detention under PSA

New Delhi, September 15: The Supreme Court quashed the detention of former JKLF militant Farooq Ahmed Dar alias Bitta Karatey, accused in around two dozen cases, under the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act. While delivering the order to this effect, a Bench comprising Justice K G Balakrishnan and Justice D K Jain said that Karatey, who is alleged to have murdered several innocents mainly people belonging to

the minority community, be forthwith released "if not required in any other case. The JKLF militant, who has been in various jails for 16 years, was first detained under the Act in July 2000. He was later detained again with the same provision in 2002 which was quashed by the Apex Court on November five, 2004..

Greater Kashmir, 16 September 2006

Proposals tabled in Working Group meet

Srinagar, Sep 15: Human rights abuse remained a key issue as various political parties tabled their proposals during the meeting of Working Group on Rehabilitation of Militancy Affected People held in Jammu Friday. National Conference (NC) presented a six-point proposal before the Working Group. The NC proposal tabled by its senior leader and MLA Ali Muhammad Sagar stated: Unconditional talks with militants NC proposed that unconditional dialogue process should be initiated with those holding gun, Amnesty to detainees, Youth languishing in various jails should be released as a part of confidence building measures except those involved in heinous crimes..

Daily Excelsior, 16 September 2006

Editorial: Makes sense

Jammu Kashmir Tourism Development Corporations decision to introduce insurance cover for tourists visiting the State is a sound business tactic. It will bolster the confidence of guests who are feeling shaky after a series of terrorist attacks in the Valley. As many as 15 visitors have been killed and about 60 injured with the militants throwing grenades on their vehicles in May and the following months this year. The popular places like the Dal Gate have been hit. This has come nothing less than a great shock after a comparative lull on this front in the last few years. In the recent past there appeared to have been almost a conscientious decision on the part of militants not to harm the sightseers..

Daily Excelsior, 17 September 2006

4 cell phone bombers arrested on highway

Srinagar, Sept 16: Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Jammu & Kashmir Police have arrested four militants of Hizbul Mujahideen who, according to officials, were all experts in fabricating, planting and detonating mobile phone IEDs in Kashmir valley. Meanwhile, eight militants have been killed in four major gunbattles between militants and security forces since last evening. IGP Kashmir, S M Sahai, told mediapersons this afternoon that Police had achieved a major success by arresting four militants of Hizbul Mujahideen from a Maruti car at Pohru Chowk, on Bypass of Srinagar-Jammu Highway, in Srinagar outskirts today..

Daily Excelsior, 17 September 2006

Self rule key to Kashmir problem: Mufti

RSPURA Sept 16: Seeking to allay apprehensions on much talked about self-rule concept of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), former Chief Minister, Mufti Mohammed Sayeed today argued that this proposal was a sort of regional federalism aimed at fulfilling aspirations and wishes of different regions of the State. He also claimed that this concept will help in the ultimate resolution of vexed Kashmir problem..The former Chief

Minister maintained that self-rule proposal will not lead to trifurcation of the State. It is a sort of creating self-governments at regional level and not dividing the State, he remarked..

Greater Kashmir, 17 September 2006

Opinion: Tourism with Insurance! (Arjimand Hussain Talib)

..The recent unfortunate, isolated but highly baffling incidents of grenade blasts on a couple of tourist buses in Kashmir are said to have set the trend of flight out of tourists from the Valley. Is it really the fear factor that has kept some tourists away after the blasts? which are anyway a day-to-day occurrence in Kashmir today? Even after the blasts, the traffic of tourists has not abated. The bustling tourist spots even in August were a stark reminder of the fact that the people who visit Kashmir are mature enough to distinguish between threat perceptions and assumed threat perceptions..

Kashmir Times, 17 September 2006

Editorial: MARGINALIA (Anuradha Bhasin Jamwal)

.. Kashmir may be the most vulnerable case with not just international powers evincing their interest but with the two major powers within South Asian region - India and Pakistan - driven by their own prejudices and compulsions to cobble together a peace effort that may not be lasting and enduring if lessons are failed to be drawn from the tiny island country. Kashmir unfortunately has not reached the stage of negotiations like Nepal (so far one of the most peaceful resolutions of conflict in South Asian history), and sadly has not even reached the level of peace negotiations as in the Nagaland case or the Sri Lankan case before violence resumed..

Kashmir Times, 17 September 2006

Protests against blasphemy

Srinagar, Sep 16: Police today used force and arrested some of the activists of the Geelani faction of the Hurriyat Conference while they were heading towards the UN office at Sona war to lodge their protest against the remarks made by the Pope Benedict XI against Islam and the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Reports said that dozens of activists of Hurriyat (G) today carried out a protest demonstration against the remarks made by the Pope and they wanted to reach the UN office at Sonwar in order to hand over a memorandum to the observer there..

Daily Excelsior, 17 September 2006

Sex scam hearing on Sept 25

Chandigarh Sept 16: A local court today fixed September 25 for hearing the Jammu and Kashmir sex racket case, featuring some former ministers and bureaucrats that has been transferred here on Supreme Courts direction. The hearing in the case will now be taken up by the court here on September 25. The bail applications of the accused will also be taken up the same day, CBIs Special Prosecutor R K Handa said here. Sessions Judge B S Mehndiratta, who will preside over the trial, said he needed to go through the case files and fixed September 25, according to Handa and another CBI Special Prosecutor Rajan Malhotra..

Indian Express, 18 September 2006

Opinion: ON THE RECORD: Ghulam Nabi Azad Chief Minister Jammu & Kashmir

Ghulam Nabi Azad talks to Shekhar Gupta, Editor-in-Chief, The Indian Express on NDTV's Walk the Talk programme about the difficulties and challenges of ruling Jammu & Kashmir. Q: What about militancy as such? Do you look back into the history of the last fifteen years and see some mistakes that we have made? We collectively as a nation, and governments here? A: Well, I won't say. As I said before people in this state are very innocent, very peace loving. In 1947, this part of the country was the only state, only part of the state, even in Jammu we had riot, not in Kashmir. There is somebody, not from within, from across the border exploiting the regional and religious sentiments of the people..

Daily Excelsior, 18 September 2006

Separatists welcome resumption of talks

Srinagar, Sept 17: Welcoming the resumption of talks between India and Pakistan, separatist leaders today said they should be result oriented and should involve the people of the State so as to resolve the Kashmir issue. We welcome the resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan. Talks should be result-oriented and carried forward seriously and sincerely, chairman of J and K Liberation Front Mohammad Yaseen Malik said..

Daily Excelsior, 18 September 2006

Omar to Mufti: Forget Bush and Mush, explain self-rule to people

Srinagar, Sept 17: National Conference chief Omar Abdullah today advised PDP patron Mufti Mohammad Sayeed to elaborate the latter's self-rule theory to an average Kashmiri before taking it all the way to New York later this month. He claimed that self-rule was nothing but a stunt and gimmick to hoodwink the people of Jammu and Kashmir and mislead the whole world with the design of keeping power confined to the Mufti family. He called it a selfish rule. While addressing a well-attended public meeting at Surasyar in Charar-e-Sharif area of Budgam district, Omar Abdullah claimed that PDP's self-rule theory was a riddle only to be solved either by Mufti Mohammad Sayeed or his daughter Mehbooba..

Indian Express, 18 September 2006

Editorial: Starting again

..Managing the complex relationship between terrorism and the peace process demands that India develop its own cross-border leverages as well as make a genuine effort to address Pakistan's political interests in finding an early solution to the Kashmir dispute. The joint statement issued at Havana confirms that considerable progress has already been made in defining the destination as well as a road map on Kashmir. Singh and Musharraf must consolidate that forward movement. They must also end the dithering on Siachen and Sir Creek agreements that have been within reach for a long time..

The Tribune, 18 September 2006

8 militants, 2 soldiers killed

Srinagar, September 17: Eight militants, three of them belonging to the banned Jaish-e-

Mohammad (JeM), and two soldiers were among 12 persons killed in Jammu and Kashmir during the past 24 hours. A police spokesman said today that three Jaish ultras were killed in an encounter at the Aderwal forests, near Repedy Behak, in the Shopian area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district last evening. The encounter took place after a joint search party of the Jammu and Kashmir police and the Army's 3 Para was attacked by militants with automatic weapons and grenades, he added..

Kashmir Times, 19 September 2006

EU team meets Hurriyat leaders

Srinagar, SEP 18: The visiting European Union delegation called on the leaders of Hurriyat Conference (A) and both the sides discussed the various contours related to the Kashmir issue. In a statement, a spokesman of the Hurriyat (A) said that the conglomerate was led by Prof. Abdul Ghani Bhat senior party leader and former chairman of conglomerate. The Hurriyat leaders while making these observations on the dimensions related to Kashmir issue said that the recent statement issued after the Havana meet between Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf is welcome but at the same time it is also important that Kashmiris are involved in finding a solution to the Kashmir issue..

Greater Kashmir, 19 September 2006

Move on JK specific CBMs

Jammu, Sep 18: Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Patron and former J&K Chief Minister, Mufti Muhammad Sayeed today said a time-bound institutional mechanism must be put in place for implementation of J&K-specific Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). Now that Indo-Pak composite dialogue has resumed and the peace process is back on track, both the countries must build on the moment by agreeing on time-bound implementation of J&K-specific CBMs, Sayeed said..

Indian Express, 19 September 2006

Hizb rejects Indo-Pak peace statement

Srinagar, September 19: Kashmir's largest militant group dismissed as meaningless an agreement to resume peace talks by the leaders of India and Pakistan, a news agency reported Tuesday. The declaration uses old and traditional language and is meaningless for the people of Kashmir. Those who are clapping at the declaration are misleading the people, the news agency quoted Hizb spokesman Junaid-ul-Islam as saying. One of more than a dozen Islamic militant groups in the region, Hizb has been fighting since 1989 for Kashmir's independence from India or its merger with neighboring Muslim-majority Pakistan. In the last 17 years, the insurgencies have killed more than 68,000 people, most of them civilians..

Indian Express, 19 September 2006

Four militant informers arrested in Rajouri

Jammu, September 19: Four persons, who were allegedly working as informers for militants, were arrested in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Mirbaaz alias Baza, Jangbaz and Mohammad Babu Hussain- all residents of Pangai, were arrested by security forces from Thanamandi tehsil yesterday, officials in Jammu said on Tuesday. Another

informer Liyakat Ali was arrested from Darkura village of Dharamsal area of the border district, they said, adding that he was working as a guide for the militants..

Daily Excelsior, 19 September 2006

Sex scam hearing on Sept 21

Srinagar, Sept 18 : The Jammu and Kashmir High Court today deferred the hearing of the sex scandal case here following a CBI plea seeking more time to comply with its orders. Justices Hakeem Imtiyaz Hussain and B A Kirmani of the Court accepted the CBI plea that sought more time to furnish the list of persons allegedly involved in the case and posted the case for September 21. Kashmir Bar Association, which filed a PIL in the case, did not appear before the Court in view of the general strike to protest the reported remarks of Pope Benedict XVI..

Daily Excelsior, 19 September 2006

5 murdered in contractors house after all doused with poison

Jammu, Sept 18: In a first incident of its kind in the City, unidentified criminals, believed to be three in number, brutally murdered five persons including a cement dealer and contractor Rajinder Bushan Chopra alias Raju Chopra, his wife and a daughter, a servant and a driver in Chopra's bungalow at Trikuta Nagar late last night. All five victims were killed using different techniques including strangulation, sniffing life out with a pillow and striking on their heads with rods or sticks after they were given poisonous substance, reportedly mixed with parsad, top police officials investigating the case told the Excelsior..

Daily Excelsior, 20 September 2006

J&K enjoys higher degree of self rule: Governor

Srinagar, Sept 19: Governor Lt Gen (Retd) S K Sinha today stated that Jammu and Kashmir enjoys the higher degree of self rule than any other State of the Country..Elaborating on self rule, the Governor said it is synonymous with democracy, which Kashmir enjoys a great measure. He pointed out that sermons in this regard are coming from the side which has derailed democracy in its mainland, choked it in Pak occupied Kashmir and totally denied it in Northern Area. In PoK they have democracy under strict central control while Northern Area is regarded as the only surviving colony in the world, he said, adding that self rule and demilitarization are more required across the border than here.. The Governor said that time has come when economics should take precedence over politics and hostilities of the past replaced by joint endeavour for economic prosperity in the Sub continent..

Indian Express, 20 September 2006

Acceptable (J&K) solution is within reach: Musharraf

United Nations, September 19: Fresh from his Havana meeting with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf today told the United Nations General Assembly that an acceptable solution of this long standing dispute (over Jammu and Kashmir was) within reach. Confident that his positive meeting with Singh will help carry forward the peace process and resolve issues, including Kashmir, Musharraf said: Pakistan desires a peaceful environment in the region. We have been engaged in a peace

process with India, aimed at confidence building and resolving issues, including the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, which have been the source of tension and conflict between the two countries in the past..

Daily Excelsior, 20 September 2006

HM militant operating in Mumbai held in Rajouri

Jammu, Sept 19: A Hizbul Mujahideen militant, who reached Rajouri district only last night after operating in Mumbai and other parts of country for last eight years after undergoing training in Pakistan, was arrested by police this morning from Gujjar Mandi near Rajouri town. He has been identified as Tasleem Ayaz Rather alias Farzar Gohar alias Shahjar Khan son of Abdul Rashid Rather, a resident of Behrot, Thanna Mandi. The militant reportedly left Mumbai following increased pressure of police in the wake of July 11 serial blasts in which nearly 200 people were killed and scores others were injured, official sources said..

Greater Kashmir, 20 September 2006

Opinion: Lets be clear (Ghulam Nabi Hagroo)

For the last three years Mirwaiz Umar Farooqs faction of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference is having talks with Government of India without explaining the basics of holding such talks. But with all that, the people of Jammu and Kashmir have been just listening to the musings of the negotiations held, without showing any sharp reactions, positive or negative. Somebody may say that the people of J&K were thus outrightly supporting the move of the Mirwaiz. But I differ with such contenders. According to my humble opinion, the situation in J&K is intriguing and perplexing that even the intellectuals withhold their breath and so the common men expect miracles to happen..

Daily Excelsior, 20 September 2006

Editorial: Changed Jammu

To say that the crime profile of this city is changing fast will be over simplification. The fact is that it has already transformed a lot. Only we as its inhabitants appear to be slow in realising this. The brutal murder of five residents including three family members in a bungalow in Trikuta Nagar is a grim reminder of this makeover. Quite understandably the gory incident has caused widespread shockwaves. It comes within a month of a murderous attempt on the life of a forest officer during morning walk near a hotel in the vicinity of the railway station. The killings now prove that we are confronted with a well trained brand of criminals. Initial doubts are that they are the outcome of a business rivalry..

Kashmir Times, 20 September 2006

Editorial: Headless Womens Commission

State Commission for Women, which is headless for the past four years, reflects the abominable indifference of the coalition government towards the women issues. This is really lamentable that the alacrity which was shown by Peoples Democratic Party and Congress coalition in removing the chairperson of the Commission immediately after it took over the reins of the government from National Conference in 2002, remained missing as far as the appointment of her successor was concerned for the reasons well

known to the ruling dispensation only. This despicable lackadaisical attitude towards the Commission, which was created with an avowed objective of giving voice to an unrepresented constituency of women of the state, is there in spite of the fact that the issue has been brought to the fore by the media, women and social organizations many a time..

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 groups 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. Only after the Indian government declares a ceasefire, the Jihad Council can think over the proposal, he said, adding nobody had contacted his group for a ceasefire. In Islamabad, Ehsan Elahi, Hizbul Mujahideen's chief spokesman, said the limited ceasefire depended on Indian troop reductions on its side of the Line of Control..

Daily Excelsior, 21 September 2006

Mediation in Kashmir will complicate situation: Azad

Brussels, Sept 20: Asking third parties to refrain from interfering in Jammu and Kashmir, Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad said here today that peace in his State could be best ensured by talks between India and Pakistan and outside mediation would complicate an already difficult situation. India is committed to pursue a comprehensive composite dialogue to resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan but the process cannot be carried forward under the threat of terrorism or through internationalisation of issues, Azad said.. In reply to a question, he said democracy is flourishing in J&K and has taken strong roots. He hoped that democracy will also root and get strong edifice across the LoC and steps would be taken to bring down the rights violation in that part of Kashmir..

Daily Excelsior, 21 September 2006

Two militants killed, 100 kg RDX seized

Srinagar, Sept 20 : Troops killed two militants of Pakistan based Lashkar e Toiba (LeT) while ultras shot dead a woman in Kashmir overnight. Two civilians were injured in a grenade attack at Sher Bagh in Anantnag district. Security forces arrested a woman militant of Lashkar and recovered a war like store in the Kashmir Valley including 100 kg RDX. A Defence Ministry spokesman said troops of 4 Para received specific information that a group of militants was hiding in the woods at Bapura in North Kashmir district of Baramulla..

Greater Kashmir, 21 September 2006

Opinion: We must know the roots of the conflict (Fayaz Ahmad Mir)

Kashmir is the abode of various races and ethnic groups whose history goes back to thousand of years. The Kashmiris thus vitally differ in some respects from their counterparts in the subcontinent. It is the Kashmiri identity and the quest for its survival and growth which made Kashmiri People resist the Mugals, Afghans, Sikhs and Dogra

regimes. Due to the value of this identity, it is quite possible that if both India and Pakistan honourably guarantee not only the existence but also the peaceful development of Kashmir, most Kashmiri will prefer an independent Kashmir..

Tribune, 21 September 2006

Opinion: Dangerous compromises (G. Parthasarathy)

Speaking to a cheering audience primarily of his supporters from Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir on September 12 in Brussels, an impassioned General Musharraf thundered, Kashmir runs in the blood of every Pakistani. This was in tune with what he said earlier this year, Kashmir runs in Pakistans veins and in my veins. He had also proclaimed on February 5, Our agenda is same as before, the right to self determination and plebiscite for the Kashmiri people..Thus, while on the one hand General Musharraf was now claiming that terrorism against India, sponsored on Pakistani controlled soil, was a free- lance affair, he was also not too subtly indulging in blackmail by insisting that terrorism would end only when the Kashmir issue was resolved to his satisfaction..

Indian Express, 22 September 2006

PDP panel to prepare draft on self rule for J&K

Srinagar, September 21: Ignoring opposition voiced by its coalition partner to the idea, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) constituted a seven member drafting committee for preparing a paper on its vision of self rule for Jammu and Kashmir. The newly constituted Political Affairs Committee (PAC) of the party set up the panel headed by former Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Hussain Baig and asked it submit a position paper to be discussed at the Prime Ministers working group on Centre state relations, a party spokesman said..

Greater Kashmir, 22 September 2006

Autonomy: NCs roadmap for Kashmir

Srinagar, Sep 21: Opposition National Conference has termed restoration of internal autonomy as the roadmap for settling the political uncertainty in Jammu and Kashmir. Restoration of internal autonomy would put at rest the political uncertainty prevailing in the state, the NC said in a resolution passed during three day party convention, which concluded here on Thursday and was attended by NC president, Omar Abdullah, chief patron Farooq Abdullah and other leaders. Six resolutions were passed with restoration of internal autonomy topping the agenda..

Daily Excelsior, 22 September 2006

Hizb denies ceasefire offer, repeats 4 conditions

Srinagar, Sept 21: While repeating a cliché of four conditions, Hizbul Mujahideen has denied that it had made any Ramazan ceasefire offer to Government of India. It has simultaneously clarified that only Muttahida Jihad Council (United Jihad Council), an alliance of over a dozen guerrilla organisations, could consider ceasefire with the security forces if such an offer was initiated and made by New Delhi. In a statement faxed to some media organisations here today, Hizbul Mujahideens Central spokesman Ehsan Illahi refuted reports in media that his organisation had made any offer of ceasefire to Government of India on the eve of the holy month of Ramazan..

Daily Excelsior, 22 September 2006

Editorial: Help them

..One does not normally hear of Gujjars and Bakarwals figuring in armed encounters anywhere in the State. One possible reason for this is that we dont have the same concept of sanctuaries as they have in Rajasthan and other states. Silently but resolutely they steer their herds through virtually inaccessible regions. Occasionally they can be spotted on the Jammu Srinagar national highway too as they move from one side to the other. They are highly regarded for their simplicity and cosmopolitan outlook. The Changpa tribe in Leh district is also engaged in identical travels to bring up the pashmina yielding goats. By all standards all these tribes have a tough existence speaking highly of their patience and stamina..

Daily Excelsior, 22 September 2006

5 militants, student killed in Valley

Srinagar, Sept 21: Security forces have wiped out a group of four infiltrating militants who were equipped with state of the art communication equipment in Uri sector of north Kashmir even as militants left a young student dead and four injured in a grenade blast on Srinagar Tangmarg Road today. Informed sources told the Excelsior that a Police recruit spotted a group of infiltrating militants near Lachhipora, close to LoC, in Uri sector of Baramulla district today..

Indian Express, 23 September 2006

India not serious about Kashmir issue

Srinagar, September 22: Claiming that Pakistan has shown flexibility in the Kashmir issue, a top leader of the moderate faction of the Hurriyat Conference said India is not serious and sincere about resolving the dispute. India has not yet budged an inch from its stand, which was enough proof that it is not serious and sincere about resolving the Kashmir issue, former Hurriyat chairman Maulvi Abbas Ansari told a Friday prayer congregation at Sajadabad here. The Kashmiris would not abandon their struggle till an honourable solution to the Kashmir issue is found, he said..

Daily Excelsior, 23 September 2006

HM ultra arrested in Doda

Jammu, Sept 22: Police today arrested a Hizbul Mujahideen militant from village Bonjwah in Kishtwar tehsil of Doda district. He has been identified as Mohd Israel son of Barru Gujjar R/o Tipri, Bonjwah. SSP Doda Manohar Singh said Mohd Israel was operating in Bonjwah, Chatroo and Dachhan areas since 1999. He was lured into militancy by Ghulam Mohd, an area commander of Hizbul Mujahideen. The arrested militant has been sent for questioning to ascertain clues from him about Hizbul Mujahideen network in Doda..

Greater Kashmir, 23 September 2006

Editorial: Heading Place before People

Prospectus of an amicable and peaceful resolution of vexed Kashmir problem brightened up once again with India and Pakistan leaders agreeing to resume the stalled peace

process..In New Delhi it is not the politicians are interested in working for cross purposes on the question of peace process but it is the establishment that has a mindset on Kashmir and relations with Pakistan. True, it is difficult to change mindset of hawks in the capital but these elements can be defeated by holding public debates on possible solutions of Kashmir problem and ensuring permanent peace in the region. To find an amicable and peaceful settlement of Kashmir problem it needs to be kept before people in correct historical perspective..

Daily Excelsior, 23 September 2006

Opinion: Maharaj Hari Singh A visionary (Col M S Jamwal)

On 23rd September 1895, Raja Amar Singh Ji was blessed with a son. Little was known at that point in time, that, this child would, one day, rule the State of Jammu & Kashmir and emerge as the leader of all the Princely States of India. Raja Amar Singh Ji probably foresaw the writing on the wall and brought up his son to learn the traditions and values which were the hallmark of the Dogras in general and the ruling family in particular. He also arranged to educate him at Mayo College, which was the prestigious institution catering for the need of modern education of the members of the royal families at the hands of the British teachers..

Daily Excelsior, 23 September 2006

CBI submits list of sex scam accused to HC

Srinagar, Sept 22: CBI, which is investigating the sex scandal case here, has submitted two lists of persons allegedly involved in the case to the Jammu and Kashmir High Court. The Central investigating agency filed the lists of persons involved in the scandal to the division bench of the court comprising of Justices Hakim Imtiyaz Hussain and B A Kirmani during the hearing yesterday. However, the CBI counsel sought more time to submit the third list of persons involved in the case which was granted by the bench. It directed the investigating agency to do the same by the next date of hearing..

DailyExcelsior, 24 September 2006

Violence level down in J&K, infiltration diminishes: PM

Nainital, Sept 23: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today said infiltration across the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir had diminished and his Government was sincerely pursuing dialogue with Pakistan and the people of the State in its endeavour to give them a life of peace, dignity and self-respect. We see that levels of violence have come down during the past two years. Things have improved substantially since our coalition Government came to office. However, deliberate attempts are being made to portray the picture as otherwise, he said addressing a conclave of Congress Chief Ministers here..

Kashmir Times, 24 September 2006

Mufti finds ray of hope in self-rule proposal

Srinagar, Sep 23 : Former chief minister and PDP patron Mufti Mohammad Sayeed today said his party finds a ray of hope and a promising opening in the self rule proposal for a peaceful, amicable and feasible final settlement of the Kashmir issue. He also favoured a cease fire in the state. Mufti was addressing a public rally at Khuri Batapora in Noorabad.

He said his party has constituted a committee to prepare a position paper on self rule encompassing both the political and economic aspects of the problem and suggesting an implementable solution..

Indian Express, 24 September 2006

PM, Azad differ on J&K

Nainital, September 23: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said infiltration from Pakistan has reduced, striking a discordant note with Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad who last week said it had increased of late. Infiltration across the Line of Control LoC has diminished, the Prime Minister said in his address to a conclave of Chief Ministers of Congress ruled states. This statement contradicts the assertion by Azad in a TV interview last week. Azad had said that during the past three years, the Pakistan army sponsored, the ISI sponsored militants from across were kept on hold..

Greater Kashmir, 24 September 2006

Harassment of 10 yr old girl sparks protests in Pampore

Srinagar, Sep 23: Hundreds of people took to streets in Drangbal Pampore in south Kashmirs Pulwama district on Saturday against paramilitary Centre Reserve Police Force troops, accusing them of harassing a 10 year girl and beating up her father when he protested. Local news agency CNS said at 12 30 pm when the girl went to a grocery store to make some purchases, she was intercepted by Thanday Ram, a member of CRPFs Road Opening Party ROP..

Greater Kashmir, 24 September 2006

Announce ceasefire in JK: Tarigami to Delhi, militants

Srinagar, Sep 23: Urging for immediate bilateral ceasefire in the Jammu and Kashmir, the Communist Party of India M on Saturday said that contending parties should not wait for a ceasefire offer to come from the other side. The party also appealed to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to facilitate the return of Kashmiri youths who had gone to Pakistan administered Kashmir PaK and now want to return..

Kashmir Times, 25 September 2006

PM ready to talk on J&K autonomy, self-rule

Nainital, Sept 24: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Sunday said that he was prepared to discuss all issues, including the question of autonomy and self-rule, with the people of Jammu and Kashmir. We are willing to discuss all issues with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, including relations between the Centre and the state, he said at a joint press conference with Congress President Sonia Gandhi at the conclusion of a two day conclave of Congress Chief Ministers in Nainital. He was asked for his comment on the reported statement of former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah that the state should be granted autonomy and that of his successor Mufti Mohammed Sayeed advocating self rule for the state..

Daily Excelsior, 25 September 2006

Over 1,000 Kashmiri militants in Hizb camps in Pak

New Delhi, Sept 24: Over 1,000 trained Kashmiri terrorists are currently stranded in three camps of the Hizbul Mujahideen in the Hazara region of Pakistans North West Frontier Province (NWFP), according to a media report. The report quoted an unnamed Islamabad based militant leader as saying that the top brass of the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) had conveyed to the Kashmiri militant leaders in January 2006 that they should not even think of crossing the Line of Control LoC, armed or unarmed. It said the ISI functionaries who had earlier worked with the militants have been asked to run routine checks to ascertain the whereabouts of the Kashmiri guides and porters who helped militants infiltrate into India in the past..

Greater Kashmir, 25 September 2006

Opinion: Does anything work in Kashmir? - I (M. Ashraf)

Perhaps nothing. From Telecommunications to Water Supply to Municipal Services to Traffic to Electricity to Healthcare, the story is same. Where lies the rot and why has it all gone out of gear? There is a need to introspect and take measures on the ground, as bare words buy no barely in the market..There does not seem to be any real physical intervention on the part of an earthly authority on a continuous basis to make it move in a proper and orderly fashion. In addition, if any part of the machine stops working or gets damaged, it never gets replaced unless there is apprehension of the whole system collapsing..

Times of India, 25 September 2006

PDP forms panel to draft paper on self rule for J&K (Mohua Chatterjee)

New Delhi: Peoples Democratic Party PDP has constituted a seven member committee to prepare a paper on its vision of self rule for Jammu and Kashmir apparently in a bid to compete with National Conference on who is a better champion of autonomy. PDPs political affairs committee set up the panel headed by former deputy chief minister Muzaffar Hussain Baig and asked it to submit a position paper to be discussed at the Prime Ministers working group on Centre state relations..If the state is divided into three regions Leh Ladakh, Kashmir and Jammu the state could have an elected governor and a system where the CM would be from one region, the governor from the second and the Speaker from the third..

Tribune, 25 September 2006

Six Pak militants killed in Kashmir

Srinagar, September 24: Six Pakistani militants, including four infiltrators, were killed in Jammu and Kashmir since last evening, an official spokesman said today. He said troops noticed the movement of a group of militants which had crossed the Line of Control LoC in the Uri sector and sneaked into the Indian side this morning. On being challenged in the forest area of Trikanjan, near Boniyar in Uri town of Baramula district, the infiltrators opened fire on troops with automatic rifles and grenades, which was effectively retaliated..

Daily Excelsior, 26 September 2006

Self rule will fulfill aspirations of Jammuites: Qarra

Jammu, Sept 25: Buoyed by the announcement of Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh to discuss all issues including Self Rule with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, Minister of Finance and Planning, Tariq Hamid Qarra arrived here to create public opinion in favour of this proposal, which was mooted by the Peoples Democratic Party PDP for ultimate resolution of Kashmir problem. Mr Qarra, who reached here this afternoon, addressed PDP workers at party office and tried to remove all mis conceptions about Self-Rule..

Daily Excelsior, 26 September 2006

Editorial: Peace first

Who will disagree with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh when he sees immense potential for development in every field in Jammu and Kashmir? He has left little scope for debate either with his categorical assertion that it can be fully exploited if there is safe and secure environment. Be it agriculture, power, trade or industry J&K like North East is crying for growth. It can be argued that there is nothing new in the Prime Ministers statement made at the end of Congress Chief Ministers conclave in Nainital. Leaders and experts have been arguing for the return of normalcy ever since the eruption of armed militancy in the State in the late 1980s. The vicious culture of the gun has brought the expansion plans virtually to a halt..

Greater Kashmir, 26 September 2006

Editorial: Heading Holding Promise

The two day Congress Chief Ministers Conclave at Nainital was by and large Kashmir centric. In the seventh Congress conclave which opened at Nainital club on Saturday, and was held to discuss various issues confronting Indian nation including the polarization of society it was by and large Kashmir that dominated the scene. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in his speech provided many positive indications of better days ahead for people of South Asian region in general and people of Jammu and Kashmir in particular..It was not be an over statement to say that the seventh chief ministers. conclave was a Kashmir conclave. Kashmir continued to dominate the discussions of the conclave on second day also..

Greater Kashmir, 26 September 2006

Opinion: Does anything work in Kashmir? - II (M. Ashraf)

Health Services The most important and the worst affected sector are the Health Services. Kashmir can pride itself in having produced some of the best Medical Specialists and Consultants in the world. A number of our doctors have made a name for themselves in a number of foreign countries. Even now we have some of the best consultants in Kashmir. However, the system itself has gone completely haywire. In the Government sector there is no discipline or accountability and in the private sector there is total commercialisation. While on one hand the general well being and health of the population has been adversely affected during last 16 years or so due to uncertain and tense situation, on the other hand the health care has deteriorated abnormally..

Hindu, 26 September 2006

Challan against 13 in J&K sex scandal

Srinagar: The Handwara police on Monday produced a challan against 13 persons, including a Janata Dal United leader, in the Jammu and Kashmir sex scandal unearthed on August 10 last. The challan was produced in a record 45 days after investigation by a Special Investigation Team headed by Superintendent of Police Firdous Iqbal. All the 13 persons, accused of sexually exploiting a number of girls under the pretext of providing them assistance and jobs, have been behind bars for over a month now..

Daily Excelsior, 26 September 2006

Sex racket: Court fixes Oct 3 for next hearing

Chandigarh, Sept 25: A local court today fixed October three as the next date of hearing on the bail applications of 12 accused in the Jammu and Kashmir sex racket case while it heard arguments on the bail pleas of two former ministers in the case but reserved its judgement on them till that date. District and Sessions Judge B S Mehndiratta fixed October three for hearing of the bail pleas and arguments on charges against the 12 accused in the case. He, however, heard the arguments on the bail pleas of former ministers and sitting MLAs Raman Mattoo and G A Mir when they, alongwith other accused, appeared before the Court but reserved his judgement on the same till Oct three..

Daily Excelsior, 26 September 2006

Med Asstt, woman among four killed in Doda

Jammu, Sept 25: Four civilians including a Medical Assistant and a woman were gunned down by the militants in Doda and Ramban last night while security forces and police destroyed two hide outs of the militants in Rajouri and Poonch districts and recovered for the first time one pistol sub machine gun. Two to three militants last night struck in two houses at village Jwari in Sumbar area of Ramban police district last night and dragged out two civilians including a woman, SSP Ramban Basant Rath said..

Indian Express, 27 September 2006

Forty five JKLF activists detained in Anantnag

Srinagar, September 26: At least 45 activists of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front were detained as the separatist group staged a demonstration in Anantnag district to highlight, what they alleged, human rights violations in the border state, official sources said. The JKLF men were detained from Anantnag district headquarters, 55 kms from here, the sources said. Earlier, senior leaders of the outfit, including chairman Mohammad Yaseen Malik, took part in a procession in the town demanding, implementation of zero tolerance policy on rights violation as promised by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh..

Kashmir Times, 27 September 2006

Mirwaiz raises slew of demands at OIC meet

Srinagar, Sep 26 : Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, chairman Hurriyat Conference A has demanded release of all political prisoners, demilitarization of urban areas, repealing of draconian laws; dismantling of bunkers from villages and towns and allowing freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of speech. Mirwaiz was addressing OIC

annual coordination meeting during the 61st session of United Nations general assembly in New York. We have welcomed confidence building measures CBMs between India and Pakistan. We however, hope that it will go a long way in strengthening the peace process if Government of India accepts our demands, he said. The Hurriyat A chairman also demanded tangible action regarding disappeared persons..

Kashmir Times, 27 September 2006

Editorial: Sudden hardening of posture

While talking of joint mechanisms and peace with Pakistan New Delhi has, suddenly and almost inexplicably, hardened its attitude toward militancy, both in the east and in the west..At the recently held conclave of Congress chief ministers at Nainital, the prime ministers literally took every one by surprise by declaring that, though there is a definite fall in the leave of infiltration across the LoC, there was no plan to announce a ceasefire on the occasion of the holy Ramadan. His statement has, actually, come as an anti climax to the hope of a ceasefire that had been built up in the last few weeks. In fact, it was the state chief minister who first proposed, nearly a month ago, that if the militants proposed and agreed to observe there could be a ceasefire, during the holy Ramadan..

Daily Excelsior, 27 September 2006

Editorial: Flood havoc

What is the extent of damage caused by floods in the Jammu region this year? The figures tell a shocking tale. As a report in this newspapers latest Sunday magazine has stated the losses run into crores of rupees. Their department wise break up is, Roads and Buildings Department Rs 18 crores, Public Health Engineering Rs 25 crores, Education Rs 1.5 crores, Rural Development Rs 13 crores, Irrigation and Flood Control Rs 35 crores and Ravi Tawi Irrigation Complex Rs 82 lakhs. The victims without fail are low lying areas of the Tawi, Chinab and Ujj rivers and those inhabiting them. They are engulfed when the nature lets loose its fury. Besides there are seasonal streams inflicting havoc in their own way. It is ironical because their presence is mostly in regions which are perpetually short of water..

Indian Express, 27 September 2006

LeT forcing students to join ranks in J&K

Jammu, September 26: Short of cadre due to elimination of its men, including some top leaders, by security forces, the Lashkar e Toiba militant outfit is forcibly taking students away for recruitment, official sources said. The LeT is short of cadre as a large number of its men and top leaders were eliminated. Now they are forcibly enrolling students and taking them away to remote areas for arms training, a source told PTI. They said a class IX student Nayaz Ahmed was kidnapped by an LeT area commander, Abu Arif, from Gool area of Udhampur district when he had gone to school a fortnight ago..

Indian Express, 28 September 2006

Afzal hanging order triggers protests across Valley

Srinagar, September 27: A day after a POTA court fixed October 20 for the hanging of Mohammad Afzal, convicted in the December 2001 Parliament attack case, protests rocked the Kashmir Valley with police using tear gas to scatter the crowds. At least 40

people, including JKLFs Yasin Malik, were taken into custody. From her home in Sopors Doubgah, Afzals wife Tabasum said her husband was not willing to file a mercy petition but she would be leaving for Delhi to try and persuade him. This morning, people came out in large numbers in Srinagar to protest the hanging order. In Maisuma, boys pelted stones on vehicles and shops..

Greater Kashmir, 28 September 2006

Death verdict will have adverse effect on Indo-Pak peace process

Srinagar, Sep 27: Several separatist and militant organizations have reacted to the decision of a Delhi Court to hang Afzal Guru on October 20 for his alleged involvement in the Parliament attack with some terming it as unfortunate and others alleging that he has been framed. In a statement, spokesman of United Jihad Council, a conglomerate of militant groups, said, Hanging Guru is equivalent to killing entire Kashmiri nation. Chairman of his faction of Hurriyat Conference, Syed Ali Shah Geelani termed the decision as an act of vengeance..

Tribune, 28 September 2006

Mehbooba launches self rule campaign

Srinagar, September 27: The PDP President, Ms Mehbooba Mufti, has said the misconceptions initially spread about the self rule in some parts of the state were slowly evaporating and the people had started realising that it was the only feasible solution which would give them the real empowerment. Ms Mufti, who has embarked on a statewide campaign to build public opinion on the partys self rule proposal, held wide ranging consultations with the people from different sections of society in Leh yesterday..

Daily Excelsior, 28 September 2006

Editorial: Hi tech terrorism

The recovery of Global Positioning System GPS as reported in this newspaper gives another high tech dimension to militancy in the State. It comes close on the heels of seizure of cassettes of Osama bin Laden, head of the Al Qaeda network, and Prof Hafeez Sayeed, founder of Lashkar e Toiba LeT. The GPS is a satellite based navigation scheme consisting of a network of 24 orbiting satellites that are orbiting in space 11000 miles from the earth. The satellites are constantly moving making two complete orbits around the earth every 24 hours..

Indian Express, 28 September 2006

14 injured in Srinagar grenade blast

Srinagar, September 27: Twelve security personnel were among 14 people injured in a grenade explosion triggered by militants at Badshah Chowk in the heart of the city. Militants hurled the grenade towards a police party at Badshah Chowk around 1550 hours causing splinter injuries to ten cops and two CRPF personnel, official sources said. They said two civilians passing through the area were also injured in the blast..

Greater Kashmir, 28 September 2006

Opinion: The litmus test (Balraj Puri)

A special importance of this conference on working of Indian Federalism is that it is

being held in Kashmir. It has not been realized that Kashmir is basically a test of Indian federalism. There has been too much emphasis on Kashmir being a test case of Indian secularism. The fact is that most of the complications in what is called Kashmir problem have been due to failure of Indian federalism to accommodate regional aspirations of Kashmiris and the failure of Kashmiri leaders to accommodate aspirations of other two regions of the state namely Jammu and Ladakh by not extending the principles of federalism within the state..

Daily Excelsior, 29 September 2006

Valleys protest against Guru conviction continues

Srinagar, Sept 28: While the Valley is preparing for a massive protest and shutdown against the execution of the Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru around the end of the holy month of Ramzan, dozens of protest demonstrations were witnessed at several places on the second consecutive day today. Call for Fridays shutdown has been given by hardline Hurriyat supremo Syed Ali Shah Geelani and supported by guerrilla organisation Hizbul Mujahideen as well as the alliance of 14 Kashmiri militant outfits, Muttahida Jihad Council (MJC)..

Greater Kashmir, 29 September 2006

Opinion: Paradox for National Conference-I (Dr Sheikh Showkat Hussain)

Throughout its history National Conference NC adopted different postures regarding Kashmir problem. Its stand depends upon proximity of its leaders with the echelons of power in New Delhi. It is pro Indian, while in power, anti India when out of power. Sheikh Abdullah used to be pro Muslim in Kashmir, communist in Jammu and secularist in New Delhi. His progeny could not afford this luxury. Therefore different persons within it assumed different roles. Sheikh Nazir remains a separatist, Omar pro Indian and Farooq for autonomy. Nowadays everyone within the clan is trying to play passive separatist card..In order to evade any negative reaction from New Delhi, NC keeps on repeating that autonomy is the only solution to Kashmir problem..

Tribune, 29 September 2006

2 cops among 6 killed in J&K

Srinagar, September 28: Two police personnel, a woman and a Hizbul Mujahideen militant were among six persons killed while troops unearthed two hideouts and recovered a cache of arms and ammunition in Jammu and Kashmir overnight. Constable Ghulam Mohammad, who was injured after Jaish e Mohammad militants attacked a police party at Budshah Chowk near here yesterday afternoon, succumbed to his injuries today. At least 12 police, CRPF and civilians were injured in the blast..

Daily Excelsior, 29 September 2006

Judge issues notice on boy killing

Srinagar, Sept 28: The inquiry officer probing into the killing of four teenaged boys by the Army at Doodhipora, Handwara in Kupwara district on February 22 this year has issued a public notice calling upon all those having any knowledge about the incident to appear before him on October 9. District and Sessions Judge Syed Tariq Ahmed Naqshbandi, who had been appointed by the State Government as the inquiry officer into

the incident, through the public notice has asked all individuals, group of people, Central and State functionaries, Commanding Officer of 33 Rashtriya Rifles, and the kin of the deceased, having any knowledge, directly or indirectly, of facts and circumstances about the matter to furnish detailed information on affidavits and produce supporting material at the High Court complex here on October 9..

Times of India, 29 September 2006

Residents of Gurez still waiting for quake relief (Saleem Pandit)

Gurez (Tangdhar): Residents of Gurez whose houses were destroyed by the earthquake on October 8, 2006, are still waiting for the government to release relief funds. Chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad visited this border area on Tuesday to inquire into the matter. Mohammad Younis Bhat, a 60 year old resident of Tangdhar, has not received even the first instalment of Rs 40,000 out of the Rs 1 lakh compensation announced by the state government after the quake..

Daily Excelsior, 30 September 2006

Total shutdown in Valley over Guru conviction

Srinagar, Sept 29: To register its protest over upcoming execution of the Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru, Kashmir valley today observed a total shutdown. While separatist leaders organised demonstrations at several places, as many as 24 people, including six Police personnel, sustained injuries in clashes between the demonstrators and Police. Reports from different corners of Valley said that shutdown was complete as almost all shops, business establishments, judicial and non judicial courts and educational institutions remained closed in all the six districts. Complete shutdown was witnessed even in the border towns of Uri, Kupwara and Trehgam which do not usually respond to frequent shutdown calls of Kashmiri separatist leaders..

Greater Kashmir, 30 September 2006

Opinion: Paradox for National Conference II (Dr Sheikh Showkat Hussain)

Para:7. In the meantime the Plebiscite Front has let its influence and support to the Government from time to time in the maintenance and restoration of law and order in the State.. Para:11. It is necessary to set out briefly the history of the Kashmir question in order to understand the aims and objectives of the Front. On October 24, 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh made a request to the Union of India for armed assistance to deal with the situation created by a Tribal invasion. The government of India reacted to the proposal and contended that no such help could be sent to the state unless it first offered to accede to the Union of India. Mr.V.P. Menon, the then Secretary in the Department relating to the states, was sent to Jammu and Kashmir and returned to Delhi on October 26, 1947, with an instrument of accession executed by the Maharaja on that day..

Kashmir Times, 30 September 2006

Editorial: Retrace suicidal step

The black warrant issued by a Delhi court for hanging of Afzal Guroo In Tihar jail on October 20 has naturally hurt the Kashmiri psyche with spontaneous protests rocking the Valley for the last three days. The announcement has not only caused widespread anger in the troubled Valley but has also contributed in bringing the peace process in reverse

gear. S.A.S Geelani, who was falsely implicated in the Parliament attack case articulated the feelings of an average Kashmiri when he accused New Delhi of going ahead with the hanging of another innocent Kashmiri. Whether Guroo was innocent or not is not very material. What makes the decision to hang him at this juncture is indeed most unfortunate..

Kashmir Times, 30 September 2006

Opinion: From Ramzan good will to belligerence (Anuradha Bhasin Jhamwal)

For the last several weeks, there was a feeling that this Ramazan may prove to be a turning point in the Kashmir conflict. Three days after the fasting month began, there were no doubts about this prediction. The only difference is that prior to the beginning of Ramzan, it was optimism and a positive change that one was expecting. A Delhi high court, in the Delhi parliament attack case, has decided that the prime accused Afzal Guroo be hanged to death on October 20. The verdict throws up an unexpected situation that is not just shocking but outrageously dangerous, mostly for the simple reason that it transforms a purely optimistic atmosphere, that could have paved way for friendship and flexibility, into one of absolute despair, where everything is closing down to this new found rigidity..

Indian Express, 30 September 2006

Opinion: We haven't even heard Afzals story (Nandita Haskar)

Mohammad Afzal has been sentenced to death by hanging for the offence of conspiring to attack the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001. The news that the date for his hanging has been fixed for October 20, 2006, has been greeted by most of the media with approval, if not celebration. But before we endorse the decision to hang Afzal we need to inform ourselves of the hard facts of the case without emotion. It is important to remember that we are not discussing whether Afzal was or was not a part of the conspiracy to attack the Parliament. He has already been found guilty of the crime and convicted. The question is on the sentence..