

The Kashmir Times, 3 September 2007

Consensus eludes members on WG recommendations

NEW DELHI, Sep 2: Members of the fifth Working Group appointed by the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to discuss relations between the Centre and Jammu and Kashmir gave diverse presentations here on Sunday on the first day of the group's meeting. Chairman Justice (rtd) Sagheer Ahmed has called a two-day meeting to deliberate on the issues pertaining to devolution of powers, methods of strengthening of democracy, secularism and rule of law and regional imbalance in development and other matters. Like last two meetings, sharp differences amongst members indicated that there would be no consensus on the group's recommendations.

Daily Excelsior, 3 September 2007

Editorial: Protest and peace

Nothing impresses us more than the protests by ordinary citizens against injustice met to them. It shows their courage individually and collectively. They will not be living up to our professed democratic environment if they don't assert their rights. Indeed, they deserve and must claim respect due to them. Their silence in the face of unfairness and intimidation will amount to complicity in perpetuating a wrong. That they stand up and call a spade a spade is a matter of immense satisfaction. Four such incidents have taken place almost simultaneously during the last weekend. In one of them, residents of a village in Rajouri district gave vent to their anger against the alleged kidnapping of a minor girl way back on August 8 when a missing person report was lodged.

Greater Kashmir, 3 September 2007

Kashmir no more focal point of Pak policy

Islamabad, Sept 2: Castigating Pakistan's Kashmir policy, the chairman of Peoples Muslim League, Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has said the Kashmir dispute was no more the focal point of the country's foreign policy. Addressing a press conference at the party's secretariat in Islamabad on Saturday, Chaudhry said, General Pervez Musharraf has taken U-turn on Kashmir and such policy is tantamount to divide Jammu and Kashmir. Terming Kashmir dispute as the core issue between India and Pakistan he said that Kashmiris being the real party to the dispute should be included in the talks process to make it a result-oriented exercise.

Greater Kashmir, 3 September 2007

Change we must

Selfish politicians, leaderless society, faulty education system, unemployment, rampant corruption and no development. Kashmir is suffering on every front and things will not change unless our young generation wakes up...There are only two ways to lead your life either let the things happen in their own way and keep tolerating it or take responsibility to change it. This is the famous dialogue delivered by DJ (Amir Khan) in the critically acclaimed and commercially successful movie Rang De Basanti. It helped propagate a revolutionary thought that made a lasting impact on the youth and motivated them to seek justice for Jessica Lal, in more or less the same way as depicted in the movie. The movie inspires everyone and it also reminds us of the system prevalent in our valley. Kashmir once a paradise on earth is now no longer the same and turmoil is not solely responsible

for the mess we are in at present. Corruption, wrong policies, no work culture, lack of accountability and responsibility etc. are major factors for lagging behind in every field.

Greater Kashmir, 3 September 2007

SHRC registers 678 cases in 2 yrs

Srinagar, Sept 2: The State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has registered 678 cases during the past two years, officials said on Sunday. They said the cases had been registered from April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2007. The officials refuted claims that the SHRC recommendations were not being implemented by the state government. The SHRC had pointed out in two successive reports that its recommendations had been ignored as no action taken reports reached the Commission. They said the SHRC received 93 recommendations during 2004-05. Out of these, 53 had been implemented and concluded while 40 were under process. During 2005-06, the officials said SHRC received 46 recommendations out of which 26 had been implemented and concluded and 20 were under process. They said the human rights violations have shown significant decline in the state during the past few months.

The Nation, 3 September 2007

Editorial: Kashmir: web of misunderstandings

At the present time, we see the Kashmir issue embroiled in a web of misunderstandings, some ancient, others new and wilful. We owe it to the thousands whose blood has consecrated the cause of Kashmir's azadi to try and disentangle it in whatever degree we can. Not much argument is called for to refute the proposition that Kashmir is just a territorial dispute between India and Pakistan. To call it a territorial dispute is simply to dehumanise it. And to go as far as saying that the dispute is not really about Kashmir amounts to saying in effect that Kashmiris are but a mythical people. When one assigns to Kashmir the sole character of being a contested territory, one has to answer the question: Has it been depopulated? If not, are Kashmiris contesting it or are they shut out of the contest? If so, with whom and by whom? The cliché of a power rivalry between India and Pakistan which is a thoughtless journalistic invention has played its own, hardly negligible, role in blocking a clear understanding. It belittles India without magnifying Pakistan.

Greater Kashmir, 4 September 2007

Editorial: Political Debacles

In 1986 the Congress government at the center dismissed the G M Shah government and Governor Jagmohan took over as the representative of the central. In 1986 the Congress government at the center dismissed the G M Shah government and Governor Jagmohan took over as the representative of the central government and effective ruler of J&K. The rationale given by New Delhi to replace Shah with Jagmohan was the breakdown of the law and order machinery. This political move in which Kashmiri politicians were shunted around like pawns was a destruction of political autonomy and a creation of institutional paralysis.

Daily Excelsior, 4 September 2007

Minister quits after being stripped of key portfolios

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Housing and Urban Development Minister Qazi Mohammad Afzal resigned today from the government, two days after he was divested of the forest, environment and ecology portfolios in the wake of an artificial scarcity of timber. Qazi, a senior PDP leader, put in his paper in protest against the taking away the forest portfolio from him by Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad on Sunday, official sources said. Criticising Azad's action, Qazi said taking away the forest portfolio from him in a "rash" manner and its public disclosure has not only put a question mark on his credibility as a minister but also "hit at the very roots of the understanding on the working of a coalition arrangement" between Congress and PDP.

Daily Excelsior, 4 September 2007

Ladakh, Kashmir leaders clash in Working Group

JAMMU, Sept 3: Heated exchanges took place between Buddhist leader and Lok Sabha member from Ladakh, Thupstan Chhewang and two Kashmir leaders including CPM MLA Mohd Yusuf Tarigami and NC MLC Mohd Yusuf Taing when former declared that people of Ladakh want separation from Kashmir while latter rejected the demand and passed "provocative remarks" against the Ladakhi leader today on Day Two of Working Group on Strengthening Centre-State relations meeting in New Delhi. Another notable development in today's meeting was a stormy walk-out by former Minister and Panthers Party MLA Harshdev Singh and a dharna for sometime outside the meeting venue in protest against "murder of democracy" by Health and Medical Education Minister Mangat Ram Sharma in the State.

Daily Excelsior, 4 September 2007

One killed, 5 hurt in blast

SRINAGAR, Sept 3: One person was killed and five others were wounded when an unexploded shell of 21 Field Ordnance Depot went off at Khundroo this afternoon. Official sources said the unexploded shell in the compound of a villager, identified as Ama, went off killing one person and injuring five others. Hundreds of unexploded shells were recently detected and defused by over one hundred members of the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) in about 15 villages around the Ordnance Depot at Khundroo which was gutted in a devastating fire causing thousands of blasts on August 11. The villages were recently declared safe for the return of thousands of villagers who migrated from their houses after the fire in which 22, including an Army Major and 15 fire fighters were killed and scores wounded.

The Kashmir Times, 5 September 2007

6,500 villages covered, JKLF march reaches Ganderbal

GANDERBAL, Sep 4: Festivity begins to flourish, in what was once known as the hub of renegades, when the caravan, of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) led by its chairman Mohammad Yasin Malik reached Main Chowk in Ganderbal, around 23 kilometers from Srinagar. In an effort to mobilise the public support for ensuring the Kashmiris' participation in final decision making on Kashmir dispute, Malik along with his supporters including prominent Front leaders under the mass contact programme Safar-e-Azadi (journey for freedom) have visited 6,500 villages, organising over 442 rallies across the valley. Today was the 108th day of this journey. During this historic

journey, the people extended their overwhelming support. "In what are known as forbidden areas like Uri, enthusiastic crowds including women and children holding lanterns participated in the late night rallies," said the prominent Front leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid. Safar-e-Azadi started on May 20, from Kokernag in South Kashmir .

The Kashmir Times, 5 September 2007

Coalition partners headed for another conflict

SRINAGAR, Sep 4: In a dramatic reaction, obviously with his party's approval, Qazi Mohammed Afzal today resigned from the council of ministers in protest against being divested of the portfolios of Forest, Environment and Ecology by the chief minister two days earlier. The issue seems to be snowballing into yet another conflict between the pesky coalition partners - Congress and People's Democratic Party (PDP). Sources said that soon after his return from New Delhi, PDP leaders, who are currently holding different portfolios in the council of ministers, called on the former chief minister and PDP patron, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed at his official residence.

Greater Kashmir, 5 September 2007

Facilitate The Travel

It was a day of optimism amidst barrage of skepticism. On April 7, 2005 when two buses carrying 21 passengers rolled out at 11.A.M on Srinagar-Jhelum Valley Road after it had remained closed for fifty five years, hopes had brightened in thousands of separated families that they would now be traveling across the line separating the two parts of Kashmir for meeting their relations without any bureaucratic rigmarole. But looking at opening of this road after two years and five months in perspective of the problems confronted by people wishing to travel on this road, it now seems that by and large it has turned out to be an exercise in futility. Since the day the road was opened hardly two thousand and five hundred people have traveled across it.

Greater Kashmir, 5 September 2007

Hold talks with Salahuddin: Javid Mir to New Delhi

Srinagar, Sept 4: Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (A) Javid Ahmed Mir has urged New Delhi to hold talks with chairman of the United Jihad Council and Hizbul-Mujahideen Supremo Sayed Salahuddin. If New Delhi can hold talks with Naga leaders in Canada then why cannot it hold parleys with Salahuddin in some other country, Mir told Greater Kashmir on Tuesday. Salahuddin has got a role to play in final resolution and without his inclusion Kashmir issue cannot resolved, Mir said, adding, New Delhi setting pre-conditions for holding a dialogue with Hizbul-Mujahideen shows that its not sincere towards resolving the Kashmir issue. Mir claimed that Salahuddin too has show an inclination towards holding a dialogue but he has got no response from New Delhi, History stands testimony to the fact that till date New Delhi has always back stabbed Kashmiris, Mir said.

Daily Excelsior, 5 September 2007

Inch by inch

It almost sounds like music to our ears in the prevailing circumstances. Top security officials have sent a very reassuring message about the safety measures for workers

engaged in the completion of the 292-kilometre long Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla railway line. This was much required in view of the latest militants' threats to non-local labourers to quit the Kashmir region. There are about 1700 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and 150 Railway Protection Special Force (RPSF) men deployed along the project sites. It is the RPSF's first exposure to the Valley. To quote its chief: "Though we are guarding railway properties across the country, our forces have gone to the Kashmir valley for the first time. It is a challenging assignment for us and we are working in close coordination with other security agencies."

Daily Excelsior, 5 September 2007

Kashir's cultural aggression against Gujjars

SRINAGAR, Sept 4: The Tribal Research and Cultural Foundation (TRCF), an organisation working for overall development of tribes of India, today termed as "cultural aggression" against Gujjars the Kashir Channel's "boycott" of Gojri language. In a statement here, TRCF national secretary Javaid Rahi alleged that the dedicated Doordarshan channel for Jammu and Kashmir DD Kashir launched with the objective of countering Pakistani media propaganda has failed to serve its purpose. "I call it cultural aggression against Gujjars as the channel does not telecast even a five-minute programme in Gojri, the language spoken by about 25 per cent population of the State. It has failed to counter massive anti-India propaganda launched by Pakistan Television (PTV)," he added.

Daily Excelsior, 6 September 2007

Hurriyat leaders meet Pak HC

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: In an attempt to bring the Kashmir issue back into limelight, a two-member Hurriyat delegation led by its chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq today began their exercise of meeting diplomatic corps by holding talks with Pakistan High Commissioner Shahid Malik. The two sides discussed the recent situation in Pakistan and its implication on the Kashmir issue. "There can't be any change in Pakistan's Kashmir policy no matter which Government comes," The Mirwaiz told to a question on whether the present situation in the neighbouring country was a cause of worry for them. During the coming days, the Hurriyat delegation would be meeting the diplomatic community from the US, the UK, France and Iran. The meetings are a part of the Hurriyat's political and diplomatic programme chalked out last month to mobilize local and international support for early resolution of the Kashmir issue.

The Kashmir Times, 6 September 2007

Crisis deepens: Afzal refuses to rejoin

SRINAGAR, Sep 5: The crisis between the coalition partners - Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Congress - today escalated further with the refusal of Qazi Mohammad Afzal to rejoin office even as chief minister, Ghulam Nabi Azad has not accepted his resignation which Qazi had forwarded to him. Meanwhile, former forest minister and the current Finance minister Tariq Hamid Qarra, who is presently on an overseas trip, has strongly refuted that he was involved in a timber scam "as alleged in media reports." Qazi had shot up the resignation letter to the chief minister late Tuesday afternoon in protest against chief minister's move, without consulting the PDP high command, of divesting

him of the portfolios of Forest, Environment and Ecology.

Greater Kashmir, 6 September 2007

Editorial: Re-awakened Police

The three distinct events during the current year demonstrate that the local Police have at last re-awakened from a deep slumber. The meticulous investigation and ultimate arrest of the culprits responsible for fake encounters regardless of the fact that the accused were part of the same force amply elucidated the fact that the Police are perfectly capable of solving any crime provided they mean to do it. The same fact has been further reinforced by the two recent incidents of rape and murder of two minor girls solved in a short span of time. Before 1990, the State Police had a good reputation of dealing with crimes and solving crime mysteries. However, the upheaval of 1990 completely side lined the local Police.

Greater Kashmir, 6 September 2007

Editorial: Kashmir History in Kashmiri Folklore - I

Among the many and variegated sources of history, folklore is the most reliable source for its antiquity, variety, and organic, secular and immaculate nature. Folklore is a reflection of the past as well as present of a community that has had a fairly long history of settlement in an ecological environment. It is most adequate reflection of the culture of a linguistic community and, as such, a perennial source of attraction for students of different fields of study, particularly anthropology and history. History has been confused with the written account of the past events that have mattered in the affairs of a nation. All the written histories are, therefore, accounts of the lives of kings and queens and various war mongers. There is hardly any history of the people ever attempted in any language. Kashmir history, too, has been Rajatarangani, that is the stories of kings, in the literal sense of the word.

The Indian Express, 6 September 2007

Ex-militants to form political outfit

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 5 : For the first time in Kashmir, a new political party comprising former militants and commanders is shaping up. The released militants having allegiance with different militant groups will form the core members of our new party, said Abdul Qadir Dar, who will be heading the political party. Dar was the divisional commander of Al-Jihad for many years before he was arrested. We will announce the name of our party within a week Dar said. Over 200 released militants from different parts of Kashmir held two separate meetings in Sopore and Tangmarg areas of North Kashmir to chalk out a strategy for the new party. We already have many members and our endeavour is to get all the released militants in the new party, he said.

The Indian Express, 6 September 2007

J-K's new RTI Act insipid: Habibullah

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 5: This Saturday, the Jammu & Kashmir Government cleared the passage of the amended J&K Right To Information Act 2005 to bring it in line with the central RTI Act. Chief Information Commissioner Wajahat Habibullah, however, says the new act with the amendments is deficient and insipid. The amended

Act has no penalty clause, in case officers don't supply information and the time limit is 30 days, only if practicable. The phrase practicable lends itself to tremendous misuse by authorities. Critics of the new amended law, like the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, that have helped the Central Information Commission study its implications say it is a lot like the Freedom of Information Act 2002 which was very limiting.

Daily Excelsior, 7 September 2007

Omar for ceasefire during Ramzan

SRINAGAR, Sept 6: The opposition National Conference today urged the Government to announce a ceasefire with the militants during the upcoming holy month of Ramzan to create a conducive atmosphere for the peace process. "In respect of Ramzan, there is a need for ceasefire with the militants. What is the hitch in going for ceasefire with gun-wielding youth when Government claims improvement in the situation," National Conference president Omar Abdullah told a public meeting at Sogam in Budgam district. Referring to the unilateral ceasefire announced by the previous Government in 2000, Omar said when it was possible during the NC rule, the present regime should consider the option as it claims that there is an improvement in the situation.

Daily Excelsior, 7 September 2007

Army shells land in village

JAMMU, Sept 6: Panic gripped at border village near Kaleeth in Akhnoor this morning after six mortar shells from a nearby Army firing range deviated from their target and landed in the nearby village were spotted today. The village Chamarki, which is inhabited by nearly 300 souls witnessed a pre-ceasefire situation today, when six shells fell in the fields, just closer to their houses at around 9.30 am. All the six Mortor shells fell in the time interval of three to four minutes. Immediately after the incident, the villagers working in the fields started moving away to seek some shelter and some rushed inside their houses. The shells landed in the fields of Kheru Ram, Prem Chand, Kunj Lal, Tej Ram and Pardeep Kumar, causing pits in the ground.

Greater Kashmir, 7 September 2007

Editorial: The beast is let loose

Of late we have been witness to some painful and gruesome events around us. Two early teen-age girls, one in Kupwara and the other in Srinagar, the heart of Kashmir, were brutally done to death after being raped. It does not matter much who the criminals are in terms of their caste and creed; they are all the so-called human beings. What matters and should concern us most is what has gone wrong? Events like these do take place in most of the places in the world in big cities and metros in particular. Kashmir, however, had remained for long years relatively crime-free but that seems now to be a thing of the past. What are the factors that have produced this situation? There is no doubt that unnatural and coercive curbs on human action do sometimes lead to violent reactionary behaviour and there is some substance in the case of those who try to explain the situation along these lines.

Greater Kashmir, 7 September 2007

Editorial: The road less traveled

Rajouri, Poonch districts have been the most neglected areas of J&K state. It is because of the topography, lack of leadership or perhaps because of being an area adjacent to actual line of control. This area has its unique identification, as the people are diligent, bold, and brave enough to face any eventuality when put to any hard trial. Since they have fought two battles i.e. of 1965- 1971 (which have been fought between India and Pakistan) and proved themselves to be steadfast, constantly. So far as their loyalty is concerned, thousands of people lost their lives and property worth crores. Thousands of people have been slaughtered and put behind the bars during the ongoing turmoil. The plight of widows, orphans, is indescribable, as they live on charity and begging.

Greater Kashmir, 7 September 2007

Safar-e-Azadi reaches Srinagar

Srinagar: After conducting more than three months long tour of south, north and central Kashmir, JKLF's Safar-e-Azadi (journey for freedom) reached Srinagar on Thursday. A JKLF spokesman in a statement here said the JKLF activists have set up the base camp in Batmaloo near the shrine of Batmaloo sahib and Front activists will carry on the Safar-e-Azadi in the city from September 7 to September 11. The JKLF chairman Muhammad Yasin Malik and other activists had started Safar-e-Azadi from Kokernag in south Kashmir on May 20 and since then JKLF activists have toured hundreds of villages throughout the Valley.

The Hindu, 8 September 2007

Supreme Court asks Centre and J & K to file status report on PoK prisoners

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Centre and the Jammu and Kashmir government to file status reports on the detenus from Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan languishing in jails in India for several years. A Bench of Justice B.N. Agrawal and Justice P.P. Naolekar passed this order on a petition filed by the State Legal Aid Committee, through its Chairman, Bhim Singh seeking release of the detenus overstaying in jails after completion of their sentence. The petitioner submitted that most of the detenus had been under continuous detentions for over 12 years.

Daily Excelsior, 8 September 2007

Hurriyat leaders meet diplomats

NEW DELHI, Sept 7: Moderate Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq has been holding a series of meetings with diplomats from various countries, seeking to mobilize support of the international community to revive the stalled peace talks. The Mirwaiz today met British High Commission's first political secretary Victoria L Whitford and discussed resolution of the Kashmir issue vis-a-vis the India-Pakistan peace talks and inclusion of the Kashmiri in the parleys. The Hurriyat chairman was accompanied by his conglomerate colleague Bilal Lone at the meeting held in the High Commission. The separatists also met French Ambassador to India Dominique Girard and Pakistan High Commissioner Shahid Malik.

Greater Kashmir, 8 September 2007

No ceasefire on cards: Salahuddin

Muzaffarabad, Sept 7: Terming the implementation of the UN resolutions as ideal

solution to Kashmir dispute, the chairman of United Jihad Council (UJC) Syed Salahuddin has said that India should honour the pledges that it had made with the world community particularly the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Implementation of UN resolutions is the ideal solution of unresolved Kashmir tangle; however, tripartite talks, involving all the stakeholders, Pakistan, India and Kashmiris could be the second option provided that the talks are purely Kashmir centric, meaningful and result-oriented aimed at thrashing out a solution of the basic issue, which is all about the legitimate right of millions of Kashmiris, Salahuddin, who is also supreme commander of Hizbul Mujahideen, told Greater Kashmir here on Friday. There should be no talks on petty issues like Baglihar or Wullar Barrage, rather there should be focussed negotiations between all the principled parties of the dispute to get the issue settled amicably, he added.

Greater Kashmir, 8 September 2007

Azadi slogans reverberate in city

Srinagar, Sept 7: After travelling relentlessly 15,000 kilometres in 110 days in every nook and corner of Kashmir, Safar-e-Azadi (journey for freedom) led by Muhammad Yasin Malik, Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) with his supporters marched through the Srinagar streets on Friday amidst thousands of city goers who welcomed them by raising pro-freedom (Azadi) slogans. Carrying Mashaals the JKLF activists and supporters raised Azadi slogans. Srinagar city wore a festive look as Mashaals illuminated the streets reverberated with pro-freedom slogans. Safar-e-Azadi which commenced from south Kashmir's Kokernag area on May 20 entered its last phase in the Valley on Friday with JKLF activists setting up the base camp at Batmaloo.

Greater Kashmir, 8 September 2007

Editorial: We need organized help

What we all know about our State is that it's far behind in almost every field especially in Medical sector. Government is trying its level best to overcome it at all possible levels; policies are being framed and funds are being allotted for upgradation of medical sector but corruption is a big hurdle for any positive change at the ground level. What ever budget is being allotted is channelised through various departments and at almost every level a part of it is retained as a share. What reaches at the ground level is about 40 to 50%. Policies are framed but not implemented. Let us start from dispensaries, sub centers and primary health centers. The services these places are supposed to render to our rural population are not being rendered, reason being that the staff strength at these places is not as per the provisions laid down, plus the basic facilities like lab investigations are not available at most of the places.

Daily Excelsior, 9 September 2007

Farooq to Geelani: Save Kashmir from destruction

SRINAGAR, Sept 8: Indirectly holding Syed Ali Shah Geelani responsible for the killing of people, National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah today asked the hard-line Hurriyat Conference chairman to adopt a path which could save people of the State from destruction. "I appeal to Hurriyat chairman Ali Shah Geelani to adopt a path which could save Kashmiri people from further destruction," Abdullah told National Conference

workers assembled at the Mausoleum of party founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah at Naseem Bagh on his 25th death anniversary. "Mistakes could be committed by any one, but what a mistake which becomes cause for killing of fellow countrymen," he said.

Daily Excelsior, 9 September 2007

IAF choppers may be used for anti-insurgency operations

NEW DELHI : After equipping its helicopter squadrons in the east with night vision devices, the IAF is shifting its focus to units in the western region where such aircraft could be used for casualty evacuation and also come to the aid of troops in militancy-hit areas like Jammu and Kashmir. The helicopters of the Indian Air Force, which have won laurels over casualty evacuation missions during the day in the militancy-hit state, could now be used during the night as well for transporting injured soldiers, a move that is expected to give a fillip to the morale of troops engaged in countering insurgents, official sources said.

Daily Excelsior, 10 September 2007

Sonia visiting Srinagar today

SRINAGAR, Sept 9: United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Chairperson and Congress president Sonia Gandhi is arriving here tomorrow to attend a women's meet at Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Complex (SKICC) on the bank of famed Dal Lake. Accompanied by Union Home Minister Shiv Raj Patil and Union Water Resources Minister Prof Saif-ud-Din Soz, UPA Chairperson will address gathering of the women drawn from different parts of Kashmir province. The women's meet is being organised by Central Board of Social Welfare, State Social Welfare Board and Social Welfare Department.

Greater Kashmir, 10 September 2007

Safar-e-Azadi is people's movement: Malik

Srinagar, Sept 9: Terming the Safar-e-Azadi as people's movement, chairman Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front Yasin Malik on Sunday said, Participation of people in large numbers in the journey should serve as an eye-opener for both India and Pakistan. Safar-e-Azadi which is scheduled to end on Monday passed through Lasjan, Soiteng, Padshahibagh Mehjoor Nagar, Jawahar Nagar and other adjoining areas on Sunday. People accorded a warm welcome to the JKLF chairman and his supporters who marched through the streets raising pro-freedom slogans. The first phase of Safar-e-Azadi in the Valley is scheduled to end on Monday. We will start the next phase of Safar-e-Azadi in Jammu after Ramadan, Malik said.

Greater Kashmir, 10 September 2007

Editorial: Freethinking taking roots

GK Foundation's one-day seminar titled The role of intelligentsia in civil society vis-vis Kashmir was a modest attempt of inward looking. It provided an interface between the intellectuals and the politicians of various ideologies from Kashmir. That the Kashmiri civil society has been shorn of such interfaces was manifest from a stream of suggestions about holding such congregations frequently. It rarely happens in conflict-hit societies that the bureaucrats and officials from the state speak their mind as pure citizens. Dr

Haseeb Drabu, Chairman J&K Bank and the State's economic advisor sounded a disclaimer that he would be speaking his personal views about the subject.

The Tribune, 10 September 2007

PDF chief for Ramzan ceasefire

Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Front (PDF) and minister for transport Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen has appealed to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the militants to announce ceasefire during the holy month of Ramzan to create a conducive atmosphere for the peace process. He said since there was an improvement in the situation, there should be no hesitation if the government initiated to announce ceasefire with the militants. He said the implementation of the ceasefire would help create conducive atmosphere for dialogue process and settlement of the Kashmir issue.

Daily Excelsior, 11 September 2007

Feminism has withstood terrorism in J&K: Sonia

SRINAGAR, Sept 10: Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), Sonia Gandhi, today said that the Congress-led coalition Governments at the Centre as well as in Jammu and Kashmir were planning and executing a number of schemes for upliftment and empowerment of women who had withstood the brunt of 18-year-long terrorism in the border State. Her host and J&K Chief Minister, Ghulam Nabi Azad, announced that a fresh battalion would be exclusively raised for women in J&K Police. Addressing a congregation of Kashmiri women at the picturesque SKICC lawns this afternoon, Sonia Gandhi said that females had faced the brunt of 18-year-long terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Kashmir Times, 11 September 2007

Vacate J&K property or pay rent: Govt panel to Army

NEW DELHI, Sep 10: After a four-month study into the troop deployment in militancy-hit Jammu and Kashmir, a committee headed by Defence Secretary Vijay Singh submitted its report to the government but remained silent on the issue of troop reduction in the state. The report, submitted to National Security Advisor M K Narayanan, suggested that Army deployment should ensure less inconvenience to the public at large especially during the cordon and search operations in the state, Defence Ministry sources said. The high-level panel, which was formed at the instruction of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on March 30 this year, also asked security forces to either vacate government buildings, schools and private houses and orchards by October-end or pay the rent according to present market rate.

Greater Kashmir, 11 September 2007

Editorial: Salute Them

The observance of twelfth anniversary of martyrdom of Mushtaq Ali young photo journalist yesterday was reminiscent of the heroic role played by majority of Kashmir journalists not only during the past seventeen years but for the past more than a century. Mushtaq Ali who was working as a photo journalist for a news organization got killed on September 10, 1995 when a bomb was delivered as gift parcel at BBC, Srinagar office and in this incident besides the then correspondent of this international news agency

many other journalists were gravely injured. It was not for the first time that journalist had earned the wrath of the powers for reporting the happenings faithfully but history of Kashmir journalism is full of such incidents where the powers have made all out efforts to muzzle the press and trample down journalists under their heavy boots.

Greater Kashmir, 11 September 2007

Farooq fire against Geelani-I (COMMENT)

When Dr. Farooq Abdullah, the man privileged to have enjoyed the best when people here suffered the worst, accuses Geelani of playing with the public sentiment, what more can one say...Geelani is single handedly responsible for the obliteration of Kashmir and its people. He has pushed people to destruction and brought them to a point where they are dying a steady but sure death...Idol's we don't keep, much less worship them. Affiliations we don't have with any political group. Fallible souls, we have no claims of being error-free. But intentional, never. Defending one against other is not our job. To uncover reality from the warrens of deceit is our sole concern. Who gets pleased, who gets annoyed, we are least bothered about.

The Kashmir Times, 11 September 2007

Deprivation by occupation

Despite tall claims made by chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad about evacuation of school buildings, agricultural land and orchards in Jammu and Kashmir from occupation of Army, the latter still continue to be in absolute and unquestioned possession of vast tracts of land that have adversely affected the lives of the people. The virtual occupation of school buildings and the presence of army, or other security forces camps, in the vicinity of schools make schools inaccessible and out of bounds for the children, thus hampering their studies and marring their prospects of getting educated. The occupation of orchards and agricultural lands, without any or inadequate compensation, often plays havoc with the livelihood of the people who mainly depend on an agrarian economy.

Greater Kashmir, 11 September 2007

Cease-Fire Can Ensure Success Of Talks

Srinagar, Sept 10: National Conference president and member Parliament Omar Abdullah has said the ceases-fire between troops and militants in the state can ensure success of talks process. The process of cease-fire as a mark of respect to holy month of Ramadhan would be an important step towards making the talks process as successful exercise and this demand of ours has also been endorsed in principle by the United Jihad Council (UJC), said Omar Abdullah while addressing a public meeting at Khalifpora, Khanyar, where he was laying the foundation stone of Sher-e-Kashmir Community Hall which is scheduled to be constructed at estimated cost of Rs 45 lakh.

Greater Kashmir, 12 September 2007

Rajouri College demilitarized after 8 yrs

Rajouri, Sept 11: The troops of Central Reserve Police Force have vacated the girls hostel of Government Post Graduate College Rajouri after eight years. The decision to leave the hostel was taken in a District Development Board meeting held in the district some time back. Now it is for the first time since the establishment of the college in 1981 that the

girl students of the college will have hostel facility. It was in 1999 that the hostel was constructed in the college premises but soon after its completion it was taken over by a CRPF company deployed in the college area. With no hostel facility for girls in the college, the percentage of girl students came down drastically in the past few years, District Development Commissioner Rajouri, Rafiq Ahmed Shaikh told Greater Kashmir.

Greater Kashmir, 12 September 2007

Farooq fire against Geelani-II

Take from Farooq, Kashmir would have not witnessed death and destruction had Geelani not emerged on the scene. It is facetious and fallacious, both. More than that, this amounts to rubbing salt into peoples wounds. It is sacrilegious to separate people from the struggle they sacrificed everything dearer and precious for. Armed struggle youth of Kashmir initiated. And without consulting or taking blessings from Geelani. Suppressed Kashmiris literally and virtually embraced gun and gunmen, they fondly revered as Mujahideen. With first grenade fired at Lal Chowk Srinagar, entire Kashmir roared one man against India. Rajiv Ghandi, the then prime minister seeing upsurge of people demonstrating outside UN Observers office in Srinagar in favor of complete independence sighed.

Greater Kashmir, 12 September 2007

Editorial: Beyond Rhetoric

The UPA Chairperson and Congress President Sonia Gandhi had all kudos and compliments for women of Kashmir for braving 'violence and terror' during the past sixteen years. In their courage she also found an 'inspiration for women' of India. It was appreciable of most powerful woman of the largest democracy in the world to feel proud about the women of the valley who have been fighting heroic battles and facing difficult situations and in her words having emerged as 'symbol of resistance'. There seemed no ostensible occasion for the Central Social Welfare Board for having organized this 'Women's Meet' at the SK International Convention Centre in which women belonging to Social Welfare Department, the Education Department and some public schools had been assembled.

Daily Excelsior, 12 September 2007

SP among 30 injured in clash over Handwara encounter

SRINAGAR, Sept 11: Killing of a 20-year-old youth of Dangiawacha, Rafiabab, in a Police-Army operation at Sherhama, Handwara, on Monday has evoked violent reaction in Sopore-Baramulla belt as people of his residential village have disputed the official claim that Mohammad Ramzan Shah S/o Abdus Salam Shah was a militant. While people in Dangiawacha area claimed that Shah was a student and residents of Sherhama stated that he was among the two militants who clashed with Army and died, as many as 30 persons, including 8 Police personnel, sustained injuries in day-long ding-dong skirmishes at Watrigam, Rafiabab, today.

Hindustan Times, 13 September 2007

Editorial: Metamorphosis & other stories

If Srinagar is any indicator, Kashmir is changing. After 19 years is the phrase in the J&K

capital that expresses popular relief with the return to normalcy after years of militant terror and State counter-terror. Walking along Residency Road, the fashionable shopping area of Srinagar, last week, I saw an unexpected notice pasted beside the entrance to an alley. It invited people of all communities to join in a march through the city to celebrate Janmashtami. Three days had passed since the Hindu festival had been celebrated. I learnt that the march had been held peacefully and Muslims had participated. The iron gates of the alley had the customary small side door for visitors. I entered and found an ancient Hindu temple being reconstructed there. Below a chinar tree, from which the temple took its name, workers were cementing the damaged prayer hall.

Greater Kashmir, 13 September 2007

KASHMIR CORE ISSUE

New Delhi, Sept 12: Former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has described Kashmir as certainly a core issue (between India and Pakistan) and said the United Nations Resolution was valid and legal. I would say that the UN resolution is valid. UN resolution is law and it is legal. But against that background, India and Pakistan, with the Kashmir leaders, are involved in a compromise dialogue and we hope it will reach a new goal...Kashmir is certainly a core issue but it is not an issue which should be allowed to derail Indo-Pakistan relationship or Indo-Pakistan dialogue, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader said in an interview to CNN-IBN.

The Kashmir Times, 13 September 2007

The historic march: Voice of the people cannot be ignored

Yasin Malik's Safar-e-Azadi came to an end -- at least the first phase of it -- with its last rally at Saura on Sunday. It was, indeed, a Herculean feat that took JKLF chief and his party to 6,500 villages in 113 days across the valley of Kashmir, enabling them to collect the signatures of over 15 lakhs of people. Never had any one anywhere in India undertaken so thorough a mass contact programme in so select an area. By accomplishing this task almost single-handedly Malik has acquired fresh credibility and has established his claim to be a mass leader of the Kashmiris. The motive behind this trek round the valley was to involve the people of Jammu and Kashmir in the dialogue process to decide the future of the state in accordance with their wishes.

Greater Kashmir, 13 September 2007

Kashmir Issue in Limbo (COMMENT)

There seems to be an inexplicable reluctance on both sides, India and Pakistan, to solve the Kashmir dispute diplomatically and amicably. A meeting of Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah's National Conference was convened on April 18, 1950, in order to pass a resolution expressly warning the United Nations to take cognizance of Pakistan's role as the aggressor (Josef Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir* 170). The distrust that pervaded the Kashmir political scene was outlined by the Communist People's Age, which assessed the United Nations Commission report to the Security Council as an instrument of the political intrigues and machinations of imperialist powers against the engendering of democracy in Jammu and Kashmir.

Greater Kashmir, 13 September 2007

Internal situation in Pak impacts peace process

Srinagar, Sep 12: National Conference chief patron and former chief minister Dr Farooq Abdullah Wednesday said the internal situation in Pakistan was having a direct impact on the peace process between India and Pakistan. Addressing a gathering during a seminar Role of Sheikh Abdullah in education at Community centre Nowhatta, Farooq expressed hope that the situation in Pakistan will return to normal and the peace process will regain momentum. Farooq while hailing his father and the former chief minister Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah said, he (Abdullah) played an important role in spreading of education in valley. Dr Farooq later distributed awards among the former secretary education Muhammad Amin Leharwal and others for their excellence in the fields of education.

The Kashmir Times, 14 September 2007

India non-flexible on Kashmir: Geelani

Srinagar, Sept 13: The Hurriyat Conference (G) chairman, Syed Ali Shah Geelani has said that non flexible approach of India on Kashmir is pushing entire South Asia region towards the path of destruction. Hurriyat Conference (G) chairman, Syed Ali Shah Geelani alongwith his supporters visited Dangiwacha today to express his solidarity with the family members of a slain student, whose killing has evoked strong resentment from local population in Watergam. Geelani said that the rising incidents of killings at the hands of Indian soldiers in Kashmir are indicative to the fact that Government of India banks of power of gun. "Government of India has got no option other than holding on Kashmir through gun. They want to silence Kashmiris at every cost", he said.

The Kashmir Times, 14 September 2007

Editorials: Encounters unchecked

Recent incidents of human rights violations in the Valley and anger of the people manifested in the slew of allegations and protests betrays the non seriousness of the government about zero tolerance to human rights abuse despite the rhetoric. The killing of a college student in Watergam-Rafiabad, allegedly using the youth as a human shield, in an encounter with militants aptly sums up the long gap between the promise of zero tolerance and the practice of infinite tolerance towards human rights abuse. What adds salt to injury is the complete denial of the security forces or the government in even acknowledging that such blatant violations have taken place. On Tuesday, September 11, the village of Watergam and its neighbouring habitations exploded in anger.

Daily Times, 14 September 2007

Kashmiris protest against student's killing, search operation

NEW DELHI: Kashmiris protested on Thursday against the killing of a student in a fake encounter and a prolonged search operation on the eve of Ramazan. Reports reaching here said that around nine students were injured in clashes with security forces when the students were protesting against their colleague's killing in the Sopore area. The Indian army said the student was an infiltrator. According to police, security forces killed two militants Abu Imran Sindhi from Pakistan and Mohammad Ramzan Shah, a local. Ramzan's death triggered massive protests as locals said he was not a militant. His brother Khursheed Shah told reporters that the security forces picked his brother from his

aunt's house and later killed him.

The Tribune, 14 September 2007

No ceasefire during Ramzan

Brushing aside the demand for ceasefire against terrorists by security forces during the holy month of Ramzan, the core group consisting of army, paramilitary forces, state police and intelligence agencies has decided to continue to target the terrorist leaders to maintain moral ascendancy. The ruling PDP, PDF and various other parties were demanding a ceasefire by the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir during the month of Ramzan. This was decided yesterday at a meeting of the core group headed by Lt-Gen T.K.Sapru, security adviser, and GOC of the Nagrota-based White Knight corps. The state DGP, Kuldeep Khoda, and senior civil and police officers were present at the meeting.

Daily Excelsior, 14 September 2007

40 injured in Pulwama, Sopore clashes

SRINAGAR, Sept 13: Forty persons, including 15 Police personnel, today sustained injuries when residents of Chakora village in Pulwama district clashed with security forces during a cordon-and-search operation and students of a Government college attempted to stage yet another protest demonstration over the controversial killing of their colleague in Sopore. Informed sources told EXCELSIOR that residents of Kolpora Chakora in Pulwama district turned violent and clashed with security forces when rumours spread that some soldiers had molested four young girls during the course of a cordon-and-search operation. Sources said that a 16-year-old girl, Ruqqaya, went unconscious which led to eruption of a massive uproar and protest.

Greater Kashmir, 15 September 2007

Operation Sadhbavana fails to win hearts in Kupwara

Kupwara, Sept 14: Army's Operation Sadhbavana (goodwill) aimed at winning hearts and minds of the people by facilitating development in the countryside has proved a damp squib in this frontier district with several micro hydel projects millions of rupees have been spent on them having failed just a few days after inauguration. The hydel project was inaugurated by Governor Lt Gen (retd) S K Sinha on October 19, 2006 when media was arranged from Srinagar to give coverage to the event. Residents of Gojari Mohalla and Ganai Mohalla say that electricity is supplied to the hamlets for just half an hour. After the inauguration of the project, they said, electricity suddenly went off and it was heard that the project got some snag in its turbine.

Daily Excelsior, 15 September 2007

Musharraf for middle path on Kashmir

ISLAMABAD, Sept 14: Seeking greater momentum in the Indo-Pak peace process, President Pervez Musharraf has said both countries needed to move away from their stated positions to find a "middle path" to resolve the Kashmir issue. "... We should move away from the stated positions. We will not move away until they do. This is our stand. If both sides move away from stated positions then we can look for middle path to resolve Kashmir. In my view there is no doubt progress but there need to increase its speed," he

said. Answering questions in an interactive programme on the state-run PTV last night, the General disagreed with the perception that efforts to improve relations between the two countries have come to a halt.

Greater Kashmir, 15 September 2007

Editorial: Special Economic Zones

India's economy right now is shining and is growing at a very fast pace. Not only the economy is moving fast but also India's purchasing power parity stands fifth in the world. At the same time the curve in the graph of unemployment is also moving fast and is becoming one factor making India a poor country because around 265 million Indians live in deprivation and one in every fourth poor persons in the world is Indian. Jammu and Kashmir being a part of India, the story is not different here because the problem of unemployment is not a concern for every mind who is going to become the victim of this problem. In J&K unemployment is buzz word because it is enforced idleness of workforce who are talented, skilled educated and are willing to work but did not find jobs or job avenues.

The Kashmir Times, 15 September 2007

Kashmiris will not surrender

SRINAGAR, Sept 14: Hurriyat Conference (G) chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani has said that people of Kashmir will not surrender before the Government of India and will continue to struggle for the right to self determination, which has been promised to them in United Nations. Addressing people after Friday congregation prayers at Jamia Masjid, Hazari Bagh, Rainawari in downtown Srinagar, Geelani said that people of Kashmir have given supreme sacrifices for the freedom struggle. "Now if somebody says that demand for right to self determination cannot be fulfilled and they want to convey that if India fails to listen to us, we as a national should tamely surrender before them," Geelani said, adding, "My personal opinion is that Kashmiris, under no circumstances, are ready to surrender. The persons having negative thinking are enemy of this nation".

The Tribune, 15 September 2007

Panun Kashmir seeks UT status

Reiterating its claim for a 'homeland' within the Kashmir valley, the Panun Kashmir, today proposed the status of a union territory to this desired homeland. A resolution to this effect, which was adopted at the Panun Kashmir annual convention here, stated, "We resolve to relentlessly pursue the goal of creation of Panun Kashmir (homeland within the Kashmir valley) to the north and east of the Jhelum where there will be an unfettered flow of the Indian Constitution with a union territory status". It also stated that the Panun Kashmir would consistently oppose the Dixon Plan "and its variants like the Musharraf plan, Kathwari formula, Wajahat Habibullah model, greater autonomy or the self-rule". In a second resolution, the Panun Kashmir, headed by chairman Dr Ajay Chrungoo, demanded the constitution of a special tribunal to address the issue of forcible occupation and "fraudulent usurpation of Kashmiri Hindu properties and shrines" in the valley.

Daily Excelsior, 16 September 2007

Editorial: Azaadi for Kashmir ?

A widely reported recent survey concludes that a majority of people living in Kashmir valley are in favour of independence or Azaadi as they describe it in popular jargon. The findings of this report at once inspire a tedious debate with connotations both political as well as academic and at the same time leave several vital questions conveniently unanswered or half-answered while raising certain new questions which too remain conveniently unanswered or half-answered. It is interesting but true. If you put straight question to Kashmir centric politicians of so-called separatist brand or Kashmir centric intellectuals and ask them to answer in a single sentence whether they want independence and what is the definition of independence they want, most of them respond with long-winding philosophical discourses referring to Kashmiri people's aspirations, human rights etc but avoid coming out with a straight answer.

The Kashmir Times, 16 September 2007

UHQ votes against Ramzan ceasefire

NEW DELHI, Sep 15: The Army-led Unified Headquarters (UH) in Jammu and Kashmir is understood to have vetoed the demand to hold fire against the militants during Ramzan, the holy month of fasting, rejecting a plea by the state's major political parties to the Centre to announce a "unilateral ceasefire." The ceasefire hopes were kindled from a reported statement on last Thursday from Syed Salahuddin, United Jihad Council chairman and Hizbul Mujahideen's chief commander, purportedly from Pakistan that he would consider ceasefire if a serious and sincere offer is made by any responsible quarter. The J&K parties pressed the Centre to respond to him.

Greater Kashmir, 16 September 2007

Geelani rejects all options except plebiscite

Srinagar, Sept 15: Rejecting all roadmaps like autonomy, four-point formula, status quo or soft borders for resolving Kashmir, the Tehreek-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani on Saturday said Kashmir issue could only be resolved through implementation of UN Resolutions suggesting plebiscite. Geelani was addressing a public meeting at Kolapora in Pulwama district. He strongly condemned the atrocities on people including women and children allegedly by the troops during crackdown. Geelani also paid glowing tributes to Shaheed-e-Awal of Tehreek-e-Hurriyat advocate Hussam-ud-Din on his third martyrdom anniversary, describing him a great freedom fighter, scholar, intellectual and writer. The general secretary Muhammad Ashraf Sehrai also spoke on the occasion.

Greater Kashmir, 16 September 2007

Ideological impact of the tribal invasion

The country, known as Jammu and Kashmir State, was lost to its people as a separate political entity in the aftermath of the tribal invasion of 24 October, 1947. Since the division of J&K into Azad Kashmir and the Indian-occupied Kashmir, people of J&K (Kashmiris as a whole) have become powerless, dependent and vulnerable in all respects. We need to understand how compelling historical circumstances have since shaped different approaches to the question of divided Kashmir. Broadly speaking, three main standpoints emerged: the Indian, Pakistani and Kashmiri. The story of 60 years of Indo-Pak independence and, paradoxically, consequent enslavement of the Kashmiris is about

such viewpoints.

Daily Excelsior, 17 September 2007

Solution to Kashmir possible now than ever before: Mufti

FLORIDA, Sept 16: Observing that a feasible and implementable solution of the Kashmir issue is more in sight today than ever before, People's Democratic Party (PDP) patron Mufti Mohd Sayeed has said the leaderships in both India and Pakistan must "grab this historic" opportunity to settle the issue permanently. "The leadership of the two countries deserves full credit, that despite various odds, they are moving towards translating their shared vision on Jammu and Kashmir into reality on the ground albeit at a guarded pace," he said at a roundtable conference on the Indo-US relations in Florida yesterday.

Daily Excelsior, 17 September 2007

Militants were targetting plots on city's outskirts

JAMMU, Sept 16: It was not only Bantalab, Janipura or Subash Nagar, falling on outskirts of the City where slain divisional commander of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) Saifullah Qari had purchased a plot and created rented hide-outs but he along with Pakistani associate Zaffar Iqbal were also in the process of purchasing more plots in Lower Roop Nagar, Mishriwalla and Domana. Sustained interrogation of Zaffar Iqbal, who was arrested by police in an injured condition after an encounter at Hyderpora, Janipura last month in which Qari was killed, and his associate Master Mohd Javed, a Government teacher, revealed that the militants had called for more hawala money from Dawood, another Jaish commander, operating from Mendhar to purchase the plots and create permanent hide-outs for the Pakistani militants to step-up militant activities in the City.

Greater Kashmir, 18 September 2007

PLAN TO REVIVE NAVIGATION ON JHELUM

Srinagar, Sept 17: The Union Minister for Water Resources, Professor Saifuddin Soz on Monday unveiled a comprehensive plan for restoration of traditional Inland Water Transport System from south to north Kashmir on river Jhelum lifeline of the Valley. The plan if implemented, Soz told reporters here, would revive traditional water transport system from Khanabal in south Kashmir's Islamabad district to Khadanyar in northern Varmul district. Jhelum is undoubtedly our lifeline. But it does not have any potential for power generation from Khanabal to Khadanyar like Chenab. The 170 km stretch has proved to be suitable for navigation purposes. Unfortunately, the age-old practice has been in jeopardy for a long time. And we now plan to revive it, Soz said.

Greater Kashmir, 18 September 2007

Editorial: Regain paradise

It's been seventeen agonizing years for Kashmir and Kashmiris. In the beginning Thousands of Kashmiri boys trekked thousands of miles over high mountains acquire arms training and to return to declare Jihad back home primarily against Indian institutions. Contrary to what was initially convinced by ordinary Kashmiri, the local insurgents fought a class-war instead. They got a better deal by settling personal scores with their own people. History is a witness to what the local militants did to amass

wealth. Huge hotels and properties have come up at prime locations in and around Lal Chowk while some of them have acquired government jobs and some have emerged as self-proclaimed politicians or intellectuals. Undoubtedly, there were a few great souls who got up for a real cause but they were overshadowed by the misdeeds of the evil element that predominated the scene. Hundreds, if not thousands were killed for personal animosity by the gun wielding youth.

Greater Kashmir, 18 September 2007

Editorial: This is Geelani Sahab speaking

I had heard him speak earlier, but this was the first live encounter with a man who puts heat into his words and has the whole ambience charged with emotions I clearly remember that day just a few months back, It was slightly overcast, threatening to rain, but didn't. I thought the summer heat would finally pave way to the cool of rain. The air had suggested that and I had believed that. I was wrong. The heat remained as such. The next thing I remember is the muzin's call. It's time for the Friday prayers. I wind up my work and come out into the street, towards the mosque. Accompanied by a friend, I suddenly hear that familiar angry voice and those familiar words over the mosque loudspeaker

The Kashmir Times, 18 September 2007

No rest during Ramzan

Hope of a cease-fire during this holy month was raised when, on Thursday, the 13th, Salahuddin, the supremo of the HM and chairman of the United Jihad Council publicly expressed his willingness to respond positively if any sincere offer of cease-fire came from the security forces through some responsible channel. Naturally, it was hoped that advent of this holy month would inaugurate peace not just for a month, but for months and years ahead allowing the parties involved in the on-going conflict to go for a meaningful dialogue for a just, democratic and lasting solution of the Kashmir problem. Most main stream parties of the state, like the PDP in the government and the NC in opposition, were also already lobbying with the prime minister in favour of a cease-fire, which hopefully might inaugurate a new era of peace. But, their arguments and expectations counted for nothing when, on Saturday, the army-led Unified Head Quarters vetoed their proposals and argued effectively in favour of continuing their operations against the militants, Ramzan or no Ramzan.

Daily Excelsior, 19 September 2007

Editorial: Save Chinar

What is the State --- Kashmir region especially --- without Chinar? We are two sides of the same coin. Chinar is our crown tree, a symbol of our identity, perhaps best-known emblem, virtually part of our heritage and all fire and glory especially during autumn. Its shrinking number over the years has been causing utmost concern. A recent report in this newspaper may only add to our discomfort in this regard. It quotes official records as having listed more than 42000 magnificent Chinars before the onset of militancy in the Valley. Presently their number is just 20986. On an average one ornamental tree is being lost every other day. About 278 Chinars have disappeared during the past three years and 340 that have partially dried are on the way to extinction. The worst hit during this period

is Baramulla district.

Daily Excelsior, 19 September 2007

Autonomy vital for Kashmir solution, says Farooq

SRINAGAR, Sept 18: Former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah today said restoration of greater autonomy would help in finding a durable and acceptable solution to the vexed Kashmir issue. Dr Abdullah said here today that the Kashmir issue had several dimensions, but restoration of autonomy would provide people relief and help them to come out of the present situation. Describing options being floated by different parties for the Kashmir solution as "mere slogans", Dr Abdullah said autonomy was more relevant based on ground realities. Kashmir has a unique position in the country as it had joined the Indian Union through accession on some conditions while other States merged in it outrightly, he said.

Greater Kashmir, 19 September 2007

Police harassing Hurriyat activists: Geelani

Srinagar: Chairman of Hurriyat conference (G) Syed Ali Shah Geelani on Tuesday accused police of harassing the people and Hurriyat activists who take part in his gatherings and processions. Hurriyat conducts peaceful gatherings and even doesn't permit people to raise antagonistic slogans, despite that Hurriyat activists and people who participate in the gatherings are harassed and quizzed on different pretexts, a Hurriyat spokesman quoted Geelani as saying in a statement here. Geelani said that earlier he was put under house arrest so that he can remain away from people. Now government by intimidating people and Hurriyat activists is trying to keep people away from me, he said.

The Kashmir Times, 19 September 2007

Right to Information

Freedom of information is the basic human right in any civilised society, more so in a country which claims to be committed to democracy. The citizens have a right to know every public act, everything that is done in a public way by those in authority. The right to information is a major safeguard against oppression, arbitrariness, corruption and misuse of power and authority by those at the helm of affairs. Transparency and accountability at various levels are essential ingredients of any democratic system and the basic postulate of such accountability and transparency is that the people should have full information about the functioning of the government. As Justice P.N. Bhagwati, succinctly put it years ago "the disclosure of information in regard to the functioning of the government must be the rule, and secrecy an exception, justified only where the strictest requirement of public interest so demands".

The Kashmir Times, 19 September 2007

Complete probes on HR abuse within months

NEW DELHI, Sep 18: A recent order from Army Headquarters directing commanders to ensure completion of inquiry into indiscipline and human rights abuses within one month has left officers fuming. The order issued by the vice-chief of army staff (army chief-designate), Lt General Deepak Kapoor, says that "henceforth courts of inquiry in high-profile cases which are under media glare will be completed in one month's time". The

order follows complaints of delay in action on various cases including human rights issues in Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast. The order has been sent to all eight commands. Officers are, however, angry at this order.

Greater Kashmir, 20 September 2007

Editorial: Mobilizing support in the West (COMMENT)

What can practically be done to meet this end, comments Dr Sheikh Showkat Hussain. In early nineties mass movements were launched in some Baltic States for secession from the former Soviet Union. Whole of the western world led by United States supported this upsurge and condemned Soviet Union for oppressing a genuine liberation movement. At present Kashmiris are having a similar experience. Americans remain indifferent towards their genuine struggle for freedom. U.S bailed out India out of Kargil debacle and persuaded Pakistan to facilitate the retreat of the militants fighting there. After 9/11 United States is pressuring Pakistan to abandon Kashmir and compromise on Status quo. Kashmiris irrespective of American attitude are destined to take the ongoing movement to its logical conclusion. It is possible simply because they are fighting for fulfillment of a genuine aspiration.

Greater Kashmir, 20 September 2007

Editorial: We've a role

After Tabinda, it was Sabrina: Two innocent souls devoured and dishonored in the broad daylight in a manner that would put the Satan to shame. Two incidents too shocking, outrageous too. So where are we? Can we simply forget these incidents as mere aberrations, and take the rest in the cocoons of complacency? Is the contemporary Kashmir society riddled with just this problem, or is there a host of challenges we do face on the social front? We must find an answer. We have been facing a highly hostile political environment for the last two decades aside. The political discourse predominantly marks the common monograph and occupies the newspaper columns apart. Let our thinkers, intellectuals and sociologists understand their role and come out of the web that has supposedly grown around them due to their long silence on issues confronting the Kashmir society as a whole.

Daily Excelsior, 23 September 2007

Renewed Roshni Act

Among all the states of Indian Union, J&K has the distinction of having introduced reform legislation of considerable magnitude and earned the name for ushering in agrarian revolution. In fact, J&K's land reform has an exception of non-payment of compensation for acquisition of surplus land. It was in the New Kashmir Manifesto (1944) that the articulation of the basic principles of land reform existed. Its implementation can be divided into two phases- reform introduced between the late 1940's and early 1950's (Khatama chakdari in Samvat 2007), and the reform introduced in 1970's (Zariah Islahat introduced in 1971 and implemented in 1973).

Greater Kashmir, 23 September 2007

Editorial: Kashmir Intelligentsia and the responsibility of institution building

The great Arab scholar Abu Reihan Al Biruni who had made a first hand and deep study

of Hindu religion and thought nearly one thousand years ago had already noted a tendency towards fossilization in these. He specifically mentioned the narrowness and xenophobia of the Hindus of his times and contrasted these with their one time alertness and receptivity which had made them learn from all nations including Greeks. Had AL Biruni been alive today he would not have hesitated to pass a similar judgement on Kashmir intelligentsia who are in the middle of nowhere as far as the huge transformations taking place in and around Kashmir are concerned.

Greater Kashmir, 23 September 2007

Salahuddin urges Pak to take Siachen issue seriously

Muzaffarabad, Sept 23: United Jihad Council chairman Syed Salahuddin has strongly reacted against India's decision to open the disputed Siachen glacier for tourism and has asked Pakistan's military leadership to give a befitting reply to India at international level. In a statement, the UJC chief also termed India-UK joint military exercises in Kargil-Ladakh a clear violation of international laws. Salahuddin said that Siachin was part of Jammu and Kashmir and for 37 years after sub-continent's partition it was under the administrative control of Pakistan. India occupied the glacier after secretly landing its troops there in April 1984 and now after 24 years by throwing it open for tourists it wanted to mislead the international community that the glacier was its integral part, he said.

Daily Excelsior, 24 September 2007

Omar harps on autonomy, Mirwaiz supports Musharraf formula

SRINAGAR, Sept 23: A delegation of diplomats from some European Union constituents, led by the Portuguese envoy, Luis Felipe Castro Mendes, today called on a number of mainstream as well as separatist Kashmiri political leaders to discuss the current situation and political developments concerning the subcontinent. The delegation is scheduled to meet with politicians and Government functionaries, including armed forces, during its 4-day visit in the Valley. National Conference (NC) president, Omar Abdullah, briefed the EU delegation about the internal and external situation. Elaborating his party position with regard to resolution of the Kashmir problem, Omar told the delegates that restoration of greater autonomy to the entire State would address the internal part of the problem.

Daily Excelsior, 24 September 2007

Kargil mishap

Rarely if at all any worthwhile information emerges out of the Ladakh region without an effort at some level. By and large developments in the far-flung territory across the Himalayas go unnoticed. Out of sight is out of mind is the idiom that explains its predicament. One will have to thank the 18th century Anglo-American poet Arthur Hugh Clough for having immaculately used the subtle turn of phrase in one of his works. One paragraph of his relevant poem is: "I knew it when we parted, well, I knew it, but was loth to tell; I felt before, what now I find, that out of sight is out of mind." An important piece of news has recently come from the remote mountainous area. Depressingly enough, however, it carries details of a momentous tragedy.

The Kashmir Times, 24 September 2007

JK govt raises 'purely' women police battalion to check militancy

JAMMU, Sep 23 (UNI): With Pakistan-aided militants adopting new strategy of enrolling women as their over ground workers (OGW), Jammu and Kashmir government has decided to raise a "purely" women battalion of Indian Reserve Police in the state. The arrest of Nahida Altaf, a law student, who carried arms and ammunition for Hizb-ul Mujahideen (HM), had given a clear message of security threat due to women OGWs of militants. The idea of raising woman police battalion was conceived soon after the arrest of a woman in Kashmir valley, who was helping militants in receiving and transmitting messages from and to their mentors via Internet from a cyber caf , for which she had been given financial help by the militants. The caf had become a hideout of militants.

The Tribune, 24 September 2007

Surveillance system along LoC to keep eye on infiltrators

To check infiltration of terrorists from Pakistan through the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir valley, the Indian Army has installed new and sophisticated surveillance equipment at selected points in Machil sector in Kupwara district. Imported from Israel, the system named Surveillance Grid is installed at a few selected points as pilot project, in the areas prone to large-scale infiltration. Surveillance Grid, the first monitoring system of its kind in entire South Asia, makes combined use of high-power cameras, thermal sensing cameras and long range observation system (Loros) to monitor all types of movements at and across the LoC. The cameras incorporated in the grid can see up to 17 km; thermal cameras can see any type of activity at night and Loros is a multi-sensor imaging system for long-range day-night observation.

Daily Excelsior, 25 September 2007

Tension in Rajouri, 20 injured

RAJOURI, Sept 24: Over 20 persons including three police officers and a CRPF constable were injured as cops opened firing in air to disperse two groups of people, who clashed during celebrations of Team India's victory in Twenty20 World Cup final at South Africa tonight. Reports said some miscreants pelted stones on each other at the Chowk in Old City when youths were bursting crackers and dancing to the tunes of drum beating after India beat Pakistan in a thrilling final to win T20 World Cup around 9.15 pm. At two-three places, the two sides exchanged stones and slogans after which police and para-military intervened but they too were subjected to stone pelting causing injuries to SP T R Katoch, SHO Rajouri Tejinder Singh, Police Post Incharge Pushpinder Singh and a CRPF constable Amit Kumar.

Daily Excelsior, 25 September 2007

Editorial: Not acceptable

All sane persons will be shocked by a report in this newspaper about four police men severely beating up two elderly villagers in Hiranagar tehsil on Saturday. The men in uniform were infuriated because the civilian duo had intervened to stop them from thrashing a minor boy in full public view over some petty matter. Their both victims were seriously injured and had to be hospitalised. Such high-handedness on the part of the police quartet (it seems one of them was actually posted elsewhere) is totally

unacceptable and should not go unpunished. It is but natural for the people to have reacted in the manner in which they finally did. Wielding sticks they not only chased away the errant police men but also forced the higher authorities to register a case against them.

Greater Kashmir, 25 September 2007

PLUNDER DURING SOPUR ?ENCOUNTER

Sopur, Sept 24: Massive protests were held at Hardshiv here Monday with the people alleging that troops looted their houses following an encounter in the area in which according to police one militant was killed. Residents said that on Sunday evening they were asked by troops to come out of their houses as there was a militant hiding in the area and they should vacate the area for their safety. Following the warning we came out of our houses and went to the adjoining villages. We heard some gunshots and a big blast. And on Monday morning when we visited our homes we're shocked, the people said.

Greater Kashmir, 25 September 2007

Editorial: Of Orphans and Widows

It is not an isolated story. The stories like that of Hajira of Wangam, Bandipora, who lost all her four sons, three killed by 'troops' and one disappeared in custody and now living a hapless life are galore. There are many parents like her who have none to look after them in the old age or to arrange treatment for their ailments. Many parents whose children were consumed by bombs and bullets have died for the lack of treatment or look after. The number of orphans in the state according to unofficial figures is more than fifty thousands, the number of widows more than twenty five thousand and number of half-widow two thousands. Since the government has not carried out any official census to know the magnitude of the problem of orphans, widows and half-widows the figures made available by various human rights organization suggest that it was an alarming problem.

Greater Kashmir, 25 September 2007

Editorial: A history of persecution

NC is baking a new cake these days. They are using every method to befool common Kashmiris, again trying to assure them that they are their well wishers. The ruling coalition government is blamed for human rights violations and corruption. As the elections are drawing near, NC is putting every effort to win the cold hearts of the masses. They talk highly about human rights violations and lay no stone unturned to debunk the weaknesses of the present government. This reminds me a famous English proverb Those who live in the glass houses should not throw stones at others houses. It seems that the NC leaders have drunk hemlock after their shameful defeat in the previous elections and are completely in living in oblivion. They remember nothing what they themselves did in the past.

The Kashmir Times, 25 September 2007

Editorial: Return of KP migrants

One is getting tired of the patent excuse that the government likes to parrot every time it is questioned about the return of the Kashmiri migrants back to the Valley. It has been

more than seventeen years since the exodus of the Pandits began to Jammu and various other parts of the country. It is most unlikely that those who have settled outside the state may wish to come back, barring those who are economically distressed, especially those living in the camps. It is also difficult to say whether or not majority of those staying in various parts of Jammu, including those in the camps, would also been keen to go back. Surveys and reports have shown that the younger generation among the Kashmiri Pandits, who have little bonding with the Valley and fail to identify with it, may not really be prepared for return. Time, therefore, is already running out.

The News, 25 September 2007

Editorial: Tourism in Siachen

India has decided to open the Siachen glacier, the part under its control, for tourism activities. The last recorded international trekking expedition to the Siachen glacier took place in the early 80s, and the official permit for the Japanese expedition was granted by the tourism department in Islamabad. In fact, there are two major developments taking place across the Siachen, the other being the United Kingdom and Indian military high altitude war game in Ladakh. The unilateral and ill-timed decision to open Siachen for mass tourism clearly goes against the spirit of the peace building and dialogue process. It can actually cast a shadow over the bilateral detente, which has seen a fair degree of improvement and consistency during the last few years. The announcement could not have come at a worse time for president Musharraf, who is grappling with multiple political and legal challenges thrown at him by the political opponents, and also by Al-Qaida leaders, Osama Bin Laden and Ayman Al Zawahiri, through an open declaration of war.

Daily Excelsior, 26 September 2007

Protesters lathicharged in City

JAMMU, Sept 25: Government Polytechnic College Principal tonight ordered closure of the college for two days, sacked the Hostel Warden and set up a committee comprising all HoDs as trouble flared up in the college this morning with a section of students, joined by political and student leaders, staging a protest outside the college premises at Vikram Chowk and disrupting vehicular movement forcing police to resort to lathicharged and detain three ABVP leaders, who were, however, set free in the evening. Students were protesting against their thrashing by the Warden and some students when they were celebrating Indian victory over Pakistan in T20 World Cup Final last night.

Daily Excelsior, 26 September 2007

Editorial: New winds are blowing

What next in Jammu and Kashmir? The oft-repeated question resurfaces whenever the state is headed for a new phase. The situation in the state is now on the verge of entering a new phase with a number of important events lined up for the coming months. They are likely to not only further delay the resumption of the virtually stalled peace process but may also change its context and complexion that may turn out to be favourable for India. Theatres of events will be Jammu and Kashmir, India's national scene and Pakistan. Take Kashmir. The state will have its Assembly elections in just over a year's time. Focus has already shifted from the stalled peace process to politics.

Greater Kashmir, 26 September 2007

Editorial: The Politics of Boycott

Democracy is all about choices. Abstention from all the given choices is as good a democratic exercise as making one of them. By this logic anyone who exhorts people to boycott the elections is, in fact, making the democracy appear even more vibrant because a functional democracy however blotted it might be is always judged in the backdrop of a stronger dissent. It may not jell with his revolutionary halo but Syed Ali Geelani's response to the largely doubted elections in Kashmir, especially after 1996, has not been a shade beyond this standard. Why then the Indian claims of practicing democracy in Kashmir are still gasping for legitimacy is entirely a different debate. Yet Geelani's loud opposition and hectic campaign against the elections has made New Delhi's efforts to sell to the world the electoral verdicts as a shift in popular preferences if not a total retreat from aspirations.

Newindpress, 26 September 2007

Editorial: Siachen : Looking beyond tourism

THE news that forty two trekkers are on their way to walk the Siachen glacier as part of adventure tourism has startled observers of the India Pakistan scene. The trek is being conducted under the aegis of the Indian Army. The trekkers are indeed privileged, what with being airlifted by the Indian Air Force, put through a high altitude acclimatising programme and being `guided' by the army personnel while on the glacier. What has prompted the Indian government to open the glacier to the public, even if in a controlled manner? This is surely not a simple tourism exercise but contains in it elements of foreign and defence policy considerations.

Daily Excelsior, 27 September 2007

Hardliners to abstain from Pak High Comm's Iftar

SRINAGAR, Sept 26: Demanding the release of all detenues before the Eid-ul-Fitr, breakaway Hurriyat Conference Chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani alleged that despite court orders, hundreds of people are languishing in State and outside jails for years. Addressing a press conference here today at the headquarters of the Hurriyat Conference, he said thousands of Kashmiris, including women, are languishing in jails in and outside the State for years. "We demand immediate and unconditional release of all detenues before Eid", he added. Mr Geelani alleged that court orders are not being honoured in the State by police and other security agencies as despite quashing of detention, hundreds of detenues are still in jails.

Greater Kashmir, 27 September 2007

Here lies the solution

Intelligentsia has a role; there is no doubt about it. However what matters the most is the thought which they influence and that can prove detrimental to the society. From family matters to global issues, we could always find the men who influence though the degree and the level of their influence varies and that determines the role of a particular individual. They do act towards their well designed theories and influence the results significantly. The intelligentsia can create havoc or bring prosperity all depends upon the

thought which they uphold. The main issue or the task is to get the intelligentsia together for different issues so that the brains are used in the collective way towards better.

Greater Kashmir, 27 September 2007

Editorial: Rollback outside bureaucrats from Kashmir

After a fractured tirade against non-local labour force in Kashmir it is now the turn of non-local bureaucrats. Syed Ali Shah Geelani's whimsical threat to Bihar labourers in the wake of aftershocks of unfortunate Tabinda murder snowballed into a big controversy with the people and the media questioning the sagacity of such diktats. Now senior PDP leader and Minister, Abdul Aziz Zargar wants the strong IAS lobby from outside the State to pack and go back from Jammu and Kashmir as they were creating obstacles in the development of the State by poking their noses into the State's matters. The revelation of the Minister, however, did not cut much ice with the people except a negligible mention in a section of the Press.

Daily Excelsior, 28 September 2007

Editorial: Not enough

How can we in this State ever forget Transparency International, a leading international non-governmental organisation addressing corruption? Its finding that Jammu and Kashmir is the second most corrupt state in the country after Bihar continues to haunt us. We have to live down this dubious distinction. When will we be able to do it? Much to our consternation we find that the latest word from it is also not very cheery. It does not directly concern the State but the country as a whole. According to it, India has improved its position in the comity of nations in terms of integrity this year.

Greater Kashmir, 28 September 2007

OIC CALLS FOR EARLY SOLUTION TO KASHMIR

United Nations, Sept 27: A ministerial panel of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Wednesday reaffirmed its support to the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination, and called on India and Pakistan to expeditiously resolve the Kashmir dispute. The call was issued by the OIC Contact Group, which met on the sidelines of the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly to review the latest development relating to the decades-old dispute over the Himalayan state. Attending the meeting were Turkish foreign minister Ali Babacan, Saudi deputy foreign minister Turki al-Kabeer al-Saud and Niger's UN ambassador Ousmane Moutari, who read out a message of support from his foreign minister. Pakistan was represented by foreign secretary Riaz Mohammed Khan. Representatives of the Kashmiri people, from both Azad Kashmir and Indian Kashmir, also participated in the meeting.

Greater Kashmir, 29 September 2007

Hurriyat against status quo: Mirwaiz

Srinagar, Sept 30: Expressing apprehensions about New Delhi's intention to maintain

status-quo in Jammu and Kashmir, Chairman of Hurriyat conference (M) Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Sunday announced, Hurriyat will oppose any such move vehemently. New Delhi not reciprocating to the flexibility shown by Pakistan and Kashmiris indicates that India wants to maintain status-quo in Kashmir. Hurriyat is against it. Mirwaiz said addressing a gathering at historic Jamia Masjid here, on the occasion of 40th death anniversary of Mirwaiz Moulana Muhammad Yousuf Shah, founder of the Muslim Conference. New Delhi cannot ignore the ground realities for long. It (New Delhi) has to come on the negotiating table for resolving this issue once for all, he said. The four-point formula floated by Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf could become the basis of Kashmir resolution, the Mirwaiz said, We demand that Musharraf's formula be discussed....

Greater Kashmir, 29 September 2007

Editorial: The mission of Gandhi-ising Kashmir

Had Gandhi been alive, our higher education department would have loved to have him as a chief guest to the valley this year. But since he's dead, there is no point exploring this possibility. Sacking academics as a priority, the department for the past two months is engaged in organizing all forms of events in the name of Gandhi. Seminars on Gandhi. Skits on Gandhi. Debates on Gandhi. Special lectures on Gandhi. Films on Gandhi. And what not? Like the typical Gandhian workers, the principals of colleges have left no stone unturned in ensuring that Gandhi Jayanti is celebrated in the colleges with much fervor. Good job, given the status of the man who got India rid of the ruthless clutches of the British Occupation.

Daily Excelsior, 29 September 2007

Editorial: Security concerns in J&K

The Northern Army Commander, Lt Gen. H. S. Panag hit the nail on the head, to my mind, when some days ago he debunked the demand for a unilateral cease-fire in Jammu and Kashmir aired by not the militants or their supporters but by the mainstream State political parties. The leaders, mainly from the People's Democratic Party of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and the National Conference of Dr Farooq Abdullah, urged at the beginning of the holy month of Ramzan that the Security Forces- that includes the Army, the part military forces and the J&K Police should unilaterally declare a cease-fire for the duration of Ramzan. Why unilaterally? I suppose the mainstream leaders expected a similar response from the militants, the Pakistan-trained imports as much as the homegrown variety, trained again, in camps across the border.

Daily Excelsior, 29 September 2007

Trouble in Poonch: several hurt, shops damaged

JAMMU, Sept 28: Over a dozen persons including a Tehsildar and a Sub Inspector were injured when police resorted to firing in air, teargassing and lathicharge to quell a strong mob which went on rampage in Poonch town this afternoon damaging shops and official vehicle of the Deputy Commissioner after a namazi going to the Mosque for Friday prayers was hit by a stone thrown by some unidentified miscreant(s). The people from majority community staged a dharna at Pritam Park in protest against the incident and demanding stern action against the accused while minority community sat outside

police station Poonch seeking action against the persons who indulged in vandalism and damaged their shops.

Daily Excelsior, 29 September 2007

Increase Army presence in J&K five times: Rajnath

JAIPUR, Sept 28: The BJP today categorically opposed the idea of any reduction in the Army presence in insurgency hit Jammu and Kashmir and said that instead of reducing the Army presence, deployment should be strengthened five fold. Speaking at the national convention of the Bharatiya Janta Yuva Morcha here today BJP president Rajnath Singh said that terrorism was still posing a serious threat to Jammu Kashmir and bordering areas along Indo-Bangladesh border. He said that a top Army official in his latest report had warned that about 5,000 militants were waiting across the Indo-Pak border for making a bid to infiltrate into Indian territory.

Daily Excelsior, 30 September 2007

Terror camps list to be submitted to Pak

JAMMU, Sept. 29: Security and Intelligence agencies have been preparing a fresh list of 52 training camps, which were still being run to train militants in dealing with sophisticated weapons and explosive devices, in Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). The list of camps is likely to be handed over to Pakistan Government at high level during talks between India and Pakistan authorities, official sources said. The list is based on sustained interrogation of militants arrested by security forces, especially those who had infiltrated into this side after undergoing training in Pakistan and PoK training camps coupled with Intelligence inputs and recovery of sensitive documents seized from slain and arrested militants.

Greater Kashmir, 30 September 2007

Editorial: Re-militarising Kashmir

For more than a year now there has been a heated debate going on for de-militarising Kashmir. The cue for the debate was given by President Musharraf in a TV interview about a year back while putting forth his four point proposal for resolving the Kashmir problem. He had suggested that after identifying the troublesome areas or regions of the state, these should be de-militarised. One of the main stream parties in the state which is a partner in the coalition government made de-militarisation as the main plank of their political campaign. It was for the first time that a main stream pro-India party was demanding de-militarisation and withdrawal of troops. However, the main ruling party in the coalition opposed the demand. This created a very odd situation.