

Hindustan Times, 2 February 2007

Army busts int'l arms racket in J&K

Army in Baramulla district of north Kashmir has busted an international racket of arms and ammunition, by arresting a Nepali resident who was acting as a conduit between Nepali Maoists rebels and Kashmiri terrorist outfits. The transaction of such dealing was made using Hawala channels in which an advocate of Jammu and Kashmir High Court is also involved.

Financial Express, 7 February 2007

Heralding the Next Gen weapons

Echoing these views is Marwan Lahoud, CEO of the guided weapons company, MBDA. A joint venture involving the Franco-German EADS aerospace group, Britain's BAe Systems PLC and Finmeccanica SPA of Italy, MBDA has business links going back some 30 years with India. Most significantly, there has been a very long-standing production cooperation with the Indian company BDL for the Milan anti-tank infantry weapon. Our air-to-air Magic 1/2 and S530D weapons have been in service on the Indian Air Force's Mirage 2000 and the Indian Navy's Sea Harrier for many years as well, says Lahoud. He adds: The historical links are being maintained today with the recent orders for the ATAM air-to-air missile for the Army and Air Force's ALH helicopters, and of course, we will be equipping the Indian Navy's new Scorpene submarines with the SM39 Exocet anti-ship missile. In fact, we consider India as one of the major pillars of our current and future business and marketing strategy beyond our domestic markets in France, Germany, Italy and the UK.

Hindustan Times, 8 February 2007

Maj Gen Datta: Most decorated army officer

GEN VK Datta, AVSM, PPMG, SM**, VSM**, Chief of Staff, Sudarshan Chakra Corps, is the most decorated officer in the Indian Army. Unassuming but pragmatic, Gen Datta was posted to Headquarters 21 Corps in May 2006. He started his career in uniform when he was commissioned in the 2nd Battalion of 1st Gorkha Rifles in March 1970. He volunteered and served in the first Counter-Terrorist and Counter-Hijack unit of the country. Gen Datta has operated intimately with the Intelligence Bureau and the Central Bureau of Investigation. Amidst the turbulent events of 1984, when the world's attention was fixed on Indira Gandhi's assassination, he took over the daunting task of Prime Minister's security and put into place the present system of VVIP Security as part of the Special Protection Group (Commando Battalion).

Hindustan Times, 9 February 2007

J&K govt bans sale of army combat dress

The Jammu and Kashmir Government has banned the procurement, purchase and sale of Army combat dresses in this city, an official spokesperson said. District Magistrate, Jammu, Hirdesh Kumar Singh, has directed vide a notification that no unauthorised person shall procure and purchase, store, stitch and sell army combat dress cloth and readymade combat dress, the spokesman said. All authorised persons, private firms and shops dealing in such articles shall immediately inform in writing to the nearest police station the fact of their carrying on of this occupation, he said.

Reuters, UK, 10 February 2007

Three Indian soldiers killed in Kashmir attack

SRINAGAR, India, Feb 9 (Reuters) - Three Indian soldiers were killed in Kashmir on Friday when suspected separatist militants ambushed an army patrol, an army spokesman said. A villager was also killed in an exchange of fire between the army and the militants that erupted after the attack in Pulwama, sparking protests from hundreds of residents. No militant group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack, the second in Pulwama district -- about 35 km (20 miles) south of Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital -- within a week. "The area has been cordoned off and search operation in the area continues," army spokesman Lieutenant Colonel A.K. Mathur said. Last Friday, four policemen were killed and three were wounded in a militant ambush in the same district. Hundreds of people shouting "We want justice!" took to streets in the area, saying the army had dragged the villager out of a mosque and killed him in cold blood, witnesses said.

The Tribune, 11 February 2007

India to spend \$35 b on military aircraft

India is set to spend \$ 35 billion on military aviation over the next 20 years as most of its existing fleet needs to be replaced sooner or later. This will put Pakistan at a strategic disadvantage with the country finding it difficult to get sellers to maintain the military balance with India. Two different reports, released at Aero India show, clearly indicate that buyers, may they be Russian, American or European, were flocking to offer the best in military technology to India and there was immense competition for the Indian Air Force's 126 fighter-jet order, besides other aircraft, to replace an ageing Indian fleet.

International Herald Tribune, 13 February 2007

Indian army starts cleaning up world's highest battlefield

SRINAGAR, India: India's army launched a massive operation on the Siachen Glacier in the Himalayas on Tuesday to clear away mounds of garbage that are blighting the world's highest battlefield. "Clean Siachen, Green Siachen" aims to remove the piles of waste ' biodegradable and non-biodegradable ' that have built up since 1984 when Indian troops first advanced onto the 80-kilometer (50-mile) glacier fearing Pakistan wanted to claim it. Siachen, an icy expanse in Kashmir, is at the northern tip of the divided Himalayan region claimed by both Pakistan and India. With forces deployed at elevations of up to 6,700 meters (22,000 feet), more soldiers have died from the bitter weather than combat.

The Tribune, 16 February 2007

Army's fight against AIDS

Even as AIDS and HIV infection assumes epidemic proportions in the country, the armed forces appear to have controlled the spread of the deadly disease amongst its rank and file. In the year 2006, there was no case of AIDS reported in the defence services. Besides, proactive measures adopted by the forces has resulted in the number of military personnel testing positive for HIV dropping to just 37 last year, from about 300 cases detected three years ago. The rate of HIV cases among Indian troops is 0.028 per cent as compared to 0.09 in the civilian society. At 0.026 per cent, the rate of HIV cases in the US military, is only slightly lower than that in the Indian military. Incidentally, armed

forces around the world face a serious risk of HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Hindustan Times, 17 February 2007

Army's selection standardisation exercise

AN 'ALL India Standardisation Exercise' for the year 2007 is being conducted at the armed forces Selection Centre Central, Bhopal, from February 17 to 27. Assessors from all the selection centres of India, responsible for selection of candidates for the Defence services will assess two batches of candidates. The aim is to calibrate the assessment of all assessors to the precise benchmark in terms of performance of the candidates.

Times of India, 18 February 2007

Indonesian Army Chief to arrive on Monday

NEW DELHI: Indonesian Army Chief General Djoko Santoso, heading a high-level delegation, will arrive here on Monday. Though India and Indonesia have held a number of joint patrols in the Malacca Strait, this will be the first time in three years that an Indonesian Army Chief would be visiting New Delhi. During his three-day visit here, General Santoso will hold discussions with his Indian counterpart General J J Singh and also call on Defence Minister A K Antony.

The Hindu, 18 February 2007

Insurgency will be dealt with an iron fist, says Army Chief

Thiruvananthapuram: Chief of the Army Staff Gen. J. J. Singh said here on Saturday that the armed forces were pursuing an "an iron fist in a velvet glove" policy in the troubled areas of the North East and Jammu and Kashmir. The "iron fist" was reserved for misguided elements and the "velvet glove" for innocent civilians caught in the "crossfire," he said. Interacting with students at Sainik School, the General said he was seeking the best possible compensation and perks for Defence personnel so as to keep their motivation level high. He said the Army took pride in being a secular, apolitical and professional organisation. "When we go into battle, we are brothers in arms. When we fight together, no soldier asks the comrade standing next to him where he hails from."

The Telegraph, 22 February 2007

India and Pakistan sign arms deal

India and Pakistan signed an agreement in New Delhi yesterday aimed at reducing the risk of a nuclear arms accident in an unusual display of co-operation. Military sources said a "hotline" would be set-up to reduce the "possibility of nuclear conflict through misunderstanding". The agreement came after Khursheed Kasuri, Pakistan's foreign minister, made a four-day visit to the Indian capital to try to edge the countries towards a solution after six decades of conflict over the Kashmir province.

BBC News, 23 February 2007

Burma captures Indian rebel base

Troops in western Burma have captured a base used by separatists from neighbouring India after a week of fighting, a rebel spokesman has said. He said that 12 rebel fighters from India's Nagaland state had been killed. Burma shares a 4,000km (2,486-mile) border

with north-eastern India. The region has been the centre of insurgent activity for more than three decades. In recent times, Burma faced Indian pressure to push out the separatists from its eastern Sagaing Division.

Financial Express, 26 February 2007

Raising technology-driven troopers

Technology will now come to the defence of Indian armed forces. Indian Army, Navy and Air Force are scouting for arsenal to prepare for a network-centric warfare. And they are being wooed by the likes of Boeing, Lockheed Martin, GE, Rolls Royce, Northrop Grumman, MDDA, Snecma and Pratt & Whitney, for the supply of defence equipment and materials. Conflicts since the first Gulf War have demonstrated that a networked force improves information sharing that enhances situational awareness; enables speed of command (decision making); thereby increasing mission effectiveness.

Zee News, 26 February 2007

Quattrocchi shadow over India's howitzer deal

New Delhi, Feb 25: As the CBI makes efforts to extradite from Argentina Italian businessman Ottavio Quattrocchi to trace alleged kickbacks in the Bofors scandal, the controversy has cast its shadow over the Army's much delayed plans to acquire upgraded 155mm .52 calibre guns capable of firing nuclear warhead shells. Wary of the political fallout of the Bofors case, the Army and the Defence Ministry, according to highly placed sources, may opt for re-tendering the proposal to buy 400 new guns estimated to be worth four billion dollars. The proposal also envisages technology transfer and manufacture of another 400 to 500 howitzers in India.

Daily Times, 27 February 2007

Indian army launches hunt for killers of 16 policemen

GUWAHATI: A massive manhunt is underway in the dense jungles of India's troubled northeastern state of Manipur after 16 policemen were killed in a militant ambush, a top military commander said on Sunday. In the deadliest attack in the state for at least two years, more than 30 heavily armed militants threw grenades and fired from hilltops at a police patrol vehicle in Tamenglong district, about 85 km northwest of the state capital, Imphal. The attack on Saturday came a day after provincial elections were held in Manipur, which borders Myanmar. Twelve policemen died on the spot and four in hospital. Five others were critically wounded. No militant group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Kashmir Observer, 27 February 2007

Army's job is done, it must go: Mehbooba

Srinagar, Feb26: Reiterating her party's demand for demilitarisation and withdrawal of special powers given to the armed forces, People's Democratic Party president, Mehbooba Mufti, today expressed hope that the union of India shall not dismiss their demands the same way that National Conference's autonomy proposal was rejected. The PDP president, however, admitted that the coalition government had experienced a setback by the fake encounter cases that came to light recently, and added that it was the special powers given to the security forces that caused the situation to turn so bad. "We

have requested the central government to seriously consider the proposals that we are making," Mehbooba Mufti said addressing a news conference at her official residence in Srinagar. "The ground situation has reached a stage where it becomes imperative for the central government to reduce troops and slash the special powers act to further confidence building in Jammu and Kashmir," she said.