

## **Business and Politics in Muslim World**

**India**  
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## **National Summary:**

Manmohan Singh answered all repeatedly asked questions about his legacy, retirement, relationship with Sonia Gandhi and any succession plan involving Rahul Gandhi, at his first press conference as executive head of UPA's second tenure in government. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh dismissed notions of any gaps in his equation with Congress president Sonia Gandhi, saying they met every week to discuss major issues. ." He said Rahul Gandhi was "very qualified" to join the Cabinet and said he had requested him on a number of occasions to do so but the young MP had declined saying he wanted to give his attention to party-building.

The Supreme Court of India has said in a verdict that it is the fundamental right of minorities to establish educational institutions without the government imposing any unreasonable restrictions. The apex court passed the judgment while upholding an appeal filed by Cannanore District Muslim Educational Association challenging a Kerala High Court decision that the association had no statutory right to run a higher secondary course in the Sir Syed College run by it.

79 persons killed and nearly 150 people injured in a train crash in West Bengal on Friday, West Bengal government suspected the involvement of Maoists in accident.

Bilateral trade between Indonesia and India, which saw a sharp increase at \$10 billion in 2009 against \$4 billion in 2005, is set to grow further following the aggressive promotional campaign launched by that country. . India was the largest buyer of Indonesian palm oil while exporting refined petroleum products, wheat, rice, sugar and steel to Indonesia. The Indo-Indonesian joint study group has already recommended further discussions for negotiating a pact that could increase bilateral trade to \$20 billion by 2020.

India's complaint against the European Union on the unjust seizure of cheap generic drug consignments meant for Latin America and African nations has received a boost, with the World Health Organisation terming such action "misuse of rules" against counterfeit medicines. In the last more than one year, EU member-countries, especially the Netherlands, had seized or halted several shipments of Indian-made generic medicines bound for Latin America and Africa. India, along with Brazil, protested against these seizures and made known to the EU its strong displeasure against the move through trade and diplomatic channels, terming it a violation of international rules

India and Turkmenistan on Tuesday discussed energy cooperation and signed several agreements signalling the desire of both countries to strengthen bilateral ties. In a sign of continuing interest in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline, New Delhi has offered to host a technical meeting of experts under the aegis of the Asian Development Bank.

The first draft of the final document of 2010 Nuclear-Non Proliferation Treaty Review conference has asked India, Pakistan and Israel to join NPT and CTBT.

With many Indian space scientists returning to their country post-9/11, the US space agency, Nasa, is feeling the need to focus on homegrown brains. In post 9/11 scenario it became tough for Indians to stay in US in tight security so they prefer to serve their own country in a comfortable environment and they think their country needs them.

Canadian high commission's allegation that Indian security agencies are involved in human rights violation that's why they denied visa to security personnel provoked Indian government and India demands apology from Canada. Most of the retired and serving officials denied visa are or were associated with agencies like the Army, BSF and IB.

A two-member delegation of Amnesty International concluded its six-day visit to Srinagar on Sunday. It held wide-ranging discussions with the government and the separatists but was denied permission to visit the jails.

A survey carried out across both Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, shows that only 2% of the respondents on the Indian side favour joining Pakistan. A study by Robert Bradrock, a scholar from London's Kings College, that involved interviewing 3,774 people in both parts of Kashmir in September-October 2009 showed that 44% of people on the Pakistani side favoured independence, compared to 43% in Indian Kashmir. 75%-95% respondents favouring independence as a final resolution. The poll showed no support either for joint sovereignty or for maintaining status quo. However, more than 58% of those surveyed were prepared to accept the Line of Control as a permanent border if it could be liberalized for greater people-to-people contact and trade. Only 8% voted against making the LoC a permanent boundary, with the highest level of opposition in Anantnag district, the report said. Few people in Kashmir, compared to many more in PoK, believed that violence was likely to resolve the Kashmir issue. In J&K, only 20% thought that militant violence would help solve the problem, compared to nearly 40% who thought it was coming in the way of a resolution. In PoK, 37% of those surveyed held the view that violence was a possible route to resolution.

In the country's worst air disaster in a decade, a Boeing 737 plane of Air India's low budget carrier overshot the airport runway and burst into flames killing 158 persons on Saturday.

### **Regional Summary:**

Frustrated over Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) backtracking on its power-sharing deal in Jharkhand, the Bharatiya Janata Party has decided to withdraw support to the Shibu Soren government.

The movement for a separate state of Gorkhaland in the Darjeeling hills took an ugly turn when Madan Tamang, the outspoken veteran who headed the All India Gorkha League (AIGL), was hacked to death, allegedly by cadres of the rival Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM). The killing of Tamang shut down Darjeeling and police contingents were back on the streets after months.

Honour killing isn't restricted to north India: a young Reddy girl and her Dalit husband were stoned to death on Wednesday night. Six people, including the parents of Baddam Swapna Reddy (22), were arrested and charged with murder on Thursday. Swapna, belonging to the high-caste Reddy community, married Sunkari Srinivas (28) about three months ago. The couple was found stoned to death on the outskirts of Krishnajiwadi village in Nizamabad. Swapna's father B Lal Reddy, mother Radha, uncle N Ram Reddy and three aunts - Yadava, Padma and Shoba - were all booked for murder and under SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act.

Fresh clashes were witnessed between members of two communities in Shahpur in which one woman was injured. Communal clashes were started from the same area after a marriage procession took place near a Masjid during prayer time.

For the fifth consecutive year, Gujarat has registered the highest cotton production in the country. The production is likely to touch the 1 crore bales mark, way ahead of its nearest competitor, Maharashtra.

## **National Report**

### **Politics:**

#### **Won't retire till I finish tasks: PM**

Sending a clear message that he was here to stay till he finished the tasks he had been assigned, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh dismissed notions of any gaps in his equation with Congress president Sonia Gandhi, saying they met every week to discuss major issues. At a 75-minute press conference, his first as executive head of UPA II, Singh was repeatedly asked questions about his legacy, retirement, relationship with Sonia Gandhi and any "succession" plan involving Rahul Gandhi. Maintaining that he had stated in a number of instances that younger people should take over, he said: "As and when the Congress party makes that judgment, I will be very happy to make place for anybody chosen by the party." He said Rahul Gandhi was "very qualified" to join the Cabinet and said he had requested him on a number of occasions to do so but the young MP had declined saying he wanted to give his attention to party-building. "Whenever he (Rahul) is ready, he will be an appropriate addition to the Cabinet," he said. In his understated yet firm style that characterizes his persona, Singh tackled several questions, including one on whether it was time for him to step aside. "I have been given this task. It is still unfinished. Till I finish the tasks, there is no question of retirement." He spoke at unusual length on the 2G spectrum controversy. Acknowledging that there were questions to be answered, he laid out what Telecom Minister A Raja had said in his defence. But Singh also pointed out that the CBI and the CVC were on the case. "The CVC has asked the CBI to look into this and that process is on. Pending that investigation, it is not proper for me to express any definite opinion." He reiterated the government stand on J&K to have a dialogue with all groups provided they shun violence, rejected the opposition charge that the CBI was being misused and made a clear distinction that terrorism was not bound by religion and was condemnable in all forms. He underlined that the National Advisory Council was not a "super cabinet" but an advisory body which made meaningful contribution in developmental programmes. Asked if he missed the structured support of Left parties, Singh underlined the pragmatic approach of the UPA to indicate that there was no use conjuring up imaginary situations. "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride," he said, but quickly added that he would welcome all like-minded parties which supported the government's policies of "inclusive growth" to join hands to carry them forward. He also used the press conference to send a clear message to senior ministers, especially Railway Minister Mamata Banerjee, to restrain themselves from rushing to the media if their views were at variance with the governments or with Cabinet colleagues. "It is not good that ministers should air their differences in public. For the past six years, our Cabinet has met almost on schedule every week. So the ministers have enough opportunity to air their views. If the views are aired in the Cabinet, I think that is the right thing to do," he said. On the inclusion of caste in the ongoing census, the Prime Minister said his government would take a decision soon on the issue. "I made a statement in Parliament in which I said that we shall take into account the views expressed in Parliament by various sections... and that I will ask the Cabinet to consider them. That process is on." He, however, evaded questions on the possibility of a Cabinet reshuffle or

expansion. The Prime Minister revealed a humorous side when, responding to a question on whose advice he benefited most, his wife Gursharan Kaur's or Sonia Gandhi's, he said: "I have the benefit of being advised by both. But both of them deal with different subjects." (The Indian Express)

### **Minorities' Issues:**

#### **Minorities can set up academic institutes: SC**

The Supreme Court has reiterated the fundamental right of minorities to establish educational institutions without the government imposing any unreasonable restrictions. "It appears that the appellant is a religious minority. As a religious minority, it has a fundamental right to establish and administer educational institutions of its choice in view of the clear mandate of Article 30," the apex court said in a recent judgment. According to Article 30, "All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions, in the country." The Article further provides that the State shall not discriminate against such institutions even if they obtain aid from the government. The apex court passed the judgment while upholding an appeal filed by Cannanore District Muslim Educational Association challenging a Kerala High Court decision that the association had no statutory right to run a higher secondary course in the Sir Syed College run by it. The college had sought permission for running the higher secondary course which was not granted to it by the government as the rules at that time did not permit it. Interpreting the Kerala Education Rules, the high court took the view that the minority institution had no statutory right to run the course, following which the association appealed in the apex court. Upholding the appeal, the apex court said that apart from enjoying the fundamental right to run the institute, the government had initially accepted the plea for sanction but could not accord the same since the matter was under litigation in the high court. "The appellant is a minority institution and its fundamental right as a religious minority institution under Article 30 also has to be kept in view," the apex court observed. (The Indian Express)

### **Hindu Fundamentalism:**

#### **'Pune Ratna' award for Thackeray**

The Pune-based Abhiyan Pratishthan on Thursday felicitated Shiv Sena supremo Bal Thackeray by presenting him the Pune Ratna 2010 award. Thackeray received the award from cartoonist S D Phadnis at his Matoshree bungalow in Mumbai on Thursday. It included a replica of Shaniwar Wada and the traditional Puneri Pagdi. Addressing the officebearers of Abhiyan Pratishthan, Thackeray said that he was born in Pune and hence "was very much a Puneite." Thackeray spoke about his experiences in Pune and appreciated the spirit of Puneites. (The Indian Express)

## Insurgency Movements:

### **79 killed as goods train rams Maoist-derailed coaches**

A goods train rammed 13 derailed coaches of the 2012 UP Howrah-Kurla Gyaneshwari Express between the Khemashuli and Sardiha stations in West Bengal in the small hours of Friday, killing 79 persons and injuring nearly 150 people. Both Railway Minister Mamata Banerjee, who visited the site, and the West Bengal government suspected the involvement of Maoists, though they differed on how the incident was staged. While Ms. Banerjee said that left-wing extremists had triggered an explosion on the track, resulting in the derailment, Director-General of Police Bhupinder Singh said that the rebels had removed pandrol clips and fishplates from both up and down lines leading to the accident. Mr. Singh told The Hindut that the death toll could rise as several bodies were still trapped in the wreckage mainly in coaches S3, S4, S5, S6 and S7 that have been badly mangled and crushed. According to eyewitness accounts, the accident occurred around 1.30 a.m. when most of the passengers were fast asleep. "The train stopped with a jolt and within a few seconds our coach started tilting towards the down line. It stayed like that for some minutes before we heard a loud bang and everyone and everything tumbled on one another," an injured Sheikh Moniruddin, an embroidery artist travelling in the most-affected S4, said.



Railway officials present at the site said the goods train, which was proceeding at high speed on the up line, rammed the derailed coaches of the Jnaneswari Express before its driver could raise an alarm. Due to the impact of the collision, the goods train engine jumped the track and ploughed into the field – completely crushing S3, S4, S5 and S6

coaches in the process. After assessing the situation, Ms. Banerjee said: “It was a calculated attack on the railways since it is the lifeline of the nation. I have requested the Union Home Minister to investigate the matter and book the culprits.” She announced an ex gratia of Rs. 5 lakh and railway jobs to the relatives of the dead and Rs. 1 lakh to the injured. (The Hindu)

### **Economic Front:**

#### **Trade with Indonesia set to grow**

Bilateral trade between Indonesia and India, which saw a sharp increase at \$10 billion in 2009 against \$4 billion in 2005, is set to grow further following the aggressive promotional campaign launched by that country. Its ambassador to India, Lt Gen Andi M Ghalib, is wooing auto giants such as TVS and Bajaj to go in for expansion of their existing units in Indonesia. As part of this effort, he met officials of TVS in Hosur while on his visit to Karnataka. In addition, he has been interacting with the Central Silk Board in Bangalore to promote production and cooperation agreement in sericulture. He said here that Indonesia was keen to work jointly with the Karnataka government to acquire know-how for sericulture. Responding to queries, he said while a large number of private parties were importing coal from Indonesia, he hoped that more and more companies would come forward for joint mining in new fields in Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi. It was also keen to sell LNG in large quantities. The close economic, trade and political level ties between the two countries, he said, had prepared the ground for diversification of bilateral cooperation. India was the largest buyer of Indonesian palm oil while exporting refined petroleum products, wheat, rice, sugar and steel to its Asean friend. In this context, he said the Indo-Indonesian joint study group has already recommended further discussions for negotiating a pact that could increase bilateral trade to \$20 billion by 2020. (The Statesman)

#### **EU seizure of Indian drugs improper: WHO**

India's complaint against the European Union on the unjust seizure of cheap generic drug consignments meant for Latin America and African nations has received a boost, with the World Health Organisation terming such action “misuse of rules” against counterfeit medicines. In a statement issued in Geneva, the WHO on Thursday rapped the EU for seizing the Indian generic drugs in transit for patent violation. “Let me be very clear. WHO deploras such things. WHO deploras that this has happened,” said Hendrick Hogerzeil, who heads the essential medicines programme at the United Nations health agency. “We had asked both the Netherlands and the EU at that time what was happening, and we ask them to make sure that this does not happen again. It was an improper, unfortunate use of counterfeit legislation.” In the last more than one year, EU member-countries, especially the Netherlands, had seized or halted several shipments of Indian-made generic medicines bound for Latin America and Africa. India, along with Brazil, protested against these seizures and made known to the EU its strong displeasure against the move through trade and diplomatic channels, terming it a violation of international rules. Although India has held several rounds of talks with EU

representatives, nothing seems to have come of it despite repeated assurances that the wrong would be undone. Consequently, the two countries went to the WHO and filed formal separate complaints, claiming that developed countries were using the cover of a fight against counterfeit medicines to protect pharmaceutical giants and suppress legitimate generic drugs. India and Brazil have asked the EU and the Netherlands to enter into dispute settlement consultations over the alleged violation of global rules. The two countries raised the issue in 2008 also when Dutch customs authorities detained Indian generic drugs at the behest of leading Western pharmaceutical giants. Under the WHO dispute settlement provisions, the EU will have to enter into consultations with India and Brazil as a first step and amicably resolve the issue within two months. If they fail to reach an agreement through Article 4 consultations, the two countries can call for the establishment of a dispute settlement panel to adjudicate the alleged violations of trade rules by Brussels. According to Indian officials, Dutch customs seized at least 19 consignments of generic drugs in 2008 and 2009; of these 16 originated in the Netherlands. (The Hindu)

### **Foreign Relations/Geo-strategic developments:**

#### **USA-India strategic dialogue from 1 June**

In a first, the USA and India will hold a four-day strategic dialogue from 1 June, which would include an in-depth discussion between leaders of the two countries on critical global and regional issues such as energy and terrorism. “The secretary (of state Mrs Hillary Clinton) looks forward to hosting minister of external affairs (Mr SM) Krishna,” state department spokesman Mr PJ Crowley said at his daily news conference here last evening. Leading the delegations of their respective countries, Mrs Clinton and Mr Krishna would co-chair the high-level inter-agency discussions on a range of critical issues, including agriculture, education, energy, trade and counter-terrorism, Mr Crowley said. “There will be in-depth discussions on global and regional issues. In addition, there'll be separate bilateral meetings, including between Cabinet members and Indian ministers on the margins of the dialogue,” Mr Crowley said. The state department spokesman also announced that undersecretary of state for political affairs Mr Bill Burns will be travelling to Afghanistan and India next week. “In Afghanistan, he will build on the progress achieved through the successful visit of (the Afghan) President (Hamid) Karzai and his Cabinet to Washington. In India he'll meet with a range of senior Indian officials and make preparations for the upcoming strategic dialogue,” he said. Also in India, from 23 May until 4 June, Ambassador Mr Philip Revere, the US coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy, will lead an inter-agency delegation from department of state, Federal Communications Commission, department of homeland security and National Telecommunications Information Administration to the fifth World Telecommunication Development Conference in Hyderabad, he announced. The conference is being held under the auspices of the International Telecommunications Union. (The Statesman)

## **First indigenous Light Combat Helicopter takes wing**

The first indigenously built Light Combat Helicopter (LCH), designed and developed by the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL), made its inaugural flight on Sunday. The project to develop the LCH, which builds on many features of the HAL-designed Advanced Light Helicopter (Dhruv), was approved in 2006. A “full-scale mock-u” of the craft was displayed at the Aero India show in 2007. R.K. Singh, Secretary, Defence (Production), said the LCH would receive Initial Operational Certification by December and Final Operational Certification soon. Air Marshal P.K. Barbora, Vice-Chief of the Air Staff, congratulated the HAL team for having developed the LCH for the Air Force, which was “desperate to have such a machine in its inventory.” Complimenting the team that designed the rotary wing design, he said it gave the copter its high degree of manoeuvrability. “Delivering a copter like this is no mean achievement when seen in the international context,” Air Marshal Barbora said. He suggested that the LCH be exported to friendly countries. HAL Chairman Ashok Naik said the project was undertaken on an outlay of Rs.376 crore, of which 10 per cent was borne by the public sector company. The company has an order book worth Rs.80,000 crore, he said. (The Hindu)

## **Saeed's release disappointing: Nirupama Rao**

Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao has expressed disappointment over the verdict of the Pakistan Supreme Court on Tuesday, which upheld the Lahore High Court's decision to release Jama'at-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed from house arrest, citing lack of evidence. “There is a sense of disappointment. I am sure everybody in this country will share the same sense of disappointment on this development, especially when we regard Hafiz Saeed as one of the masterminds of the Mumbai terror attacks and he has openly urged jihad against India,” Ms. Rao said while replying to questions after a briefing on President Pratibha Patil's visit to China. Pointing out that JuD has been designated as a terrorist organisation by the United Nations Security Council, Ms. Rao said she felt India had given enough evidence to Pakistan on the activities and role of Saeed. “Pakistan has assured us that it will not allow its territory to be used against India. We hope Pakistan will be sensitive to our concerns and take meaningful action,” she added. (The Hindu)

## **India, Turkmenistan explore energy cooperation**

India and Turkmenistan on Tuesday discussed energy cooperation and signed several agreements signalling the desire of both countries to strengthen bilateral ties. In a sign of continuing interest in the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline, New Delhi has offered to host a technical meeting of experts under the aegis of the Asian Development Bank. In meetings with Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, on his maiden visit, senior Indian leaders touched upon the progress of the pipeline being constructed by Ashgabat from its gas rich eastern region to export terminals in the west. India has shown interest in the possibility of Turkmenistan exporting some of the gas to northern Iran. It could then be swapped with gas from Iran's southern seaboard into an under-sea pipeline, obviating the need for a surface Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline. The SAGE (South Asia Gas Enterprise Pvt. Ltd.) project

envisages a Middle-East natural gas gathering system connecting gas sources to the coast of the Arabian peninsula. From there, the SAGE family of pipelines plans to follow a route surveyed 15 years back and declared unviable as techniques of deepwater pipe-laying and manufacturing had not matured. "Technology has made this feasible now," said an official. The SAGE has finalised a MoU with National Iranian Gas Export Company for developing gas exports through this route, bypassing the territory of Pakistan. The Gas Authority of India Limited has also entered into a "principles of cooperation arrangement" for this sea route. However, the pipeline would pass on Pakistan's continental shelf. During a full day of official engagements, Mr. Berdimuhamedov met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Vice President Hamid Ansari, Petroleum Minister Murli Deora and External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna. The President Pratibha Patil hosted a banquet and United Progressive Alliance Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Leader of the Opposition (Lok Sabha) Sushma Swaraj called on him. India feels it is essential to engage separately with Turkmenistan as it is the only Central Asian country which is not part of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). New Delhi enjoys observer status at the SCO and is inclined to become a full member provided the six-nation grouping amends its membership rules at its forthcoming summit next month in Tashkent. (The Hindu)

### **India urged to joint NPT and CTBT**

Breaking the tradition of not naming countries, the first draft of the final document of 2010 Nuclear-Non Proliferation Treaty Review conference has asked India, Pakistan and Israel to join NPT and CTBT. "The conference calls upon India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to the treaty as non-nuclear weapon States, promptly and without conditions, thereby accepting an internationally legally binding commitment not to acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices," the first draft of the document reads. "The conference also calls upon India and Pakistan to maintain moratoriums on nuclear testing and calls upon India, Israel and Pakistan to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) without delay and without conditions," it said. The NPT Review Conference is held every five years to assess the progress in reaching the goals set out in the 1970 treaty to disarm and stop the spread of nuclear weapons. This year it started on 3 May and would end on 28 May when the final draft is expected. India, Pakistan and Israel have not signed the treaty and do not attend. The last conference in 2005 ended in failure. (The Statesman)

### **'Nasa can no longer depend on Indians'**

With many Indian space scientists returning to their country post-9/11, the US space agency, Nasa, is feeling the need to focus on "homegrown brains", Nasa administrator Charles Bolden has said. The Nasa chief made it clear during a meeting with members of Council on Foreign Relations in Washington on Monday. "Nasa can no longer depend on expatriates", he said. Bolden remarked that after 9/11 it became tough for Indians and Asians to get into the US and stay there. He said Indian space scientists wanted to return to their country because they were keen to help develop India's space technology and lead a "hassle-free life". He told the meeting: "What a lot of them are starting to do today is they're going back home. You know especially Indians. They're saying why should I go

through this hassle? I can go back to my own country and I can really make a difference," Bolden said. (Times of India)

### **Canada must apologize for visa denials: India**

'Mind your language': That is the blunt message India has conveyed to Canada. The government has told Canadian high commissioner Joseph Caron that the aspersions cast by his mission on Indian security forces and agencies were not acceptable. With more instances of Canadian diplomats accusing Indian security forces - BSF, Intelligence Bureau and others - of torture and human rights violations coming to light, India's resentment was publicly articulated by foreign minister S M Krishna. Most of the retired and serving officials denied visa are or were associated with agencies like the Army, BSF and IB. While rejecting their visa applications, the Canadian high commission said these officials could "engage in an act of espionage or subversion" or "violence that would or might endanger the lives or safety of persons in Canada". Krishna told reporters in Bangalore that Canada's remarks against security forces were "unacceptable". "We have conveyed to the Canadian government that certain remarks in some letters, issued by their high commission in response to visa requests from serving or retired officers of our security forces and agencies, were unacceptable," Krishna said. "India is a democracy. All institutions function under our Constitution. We are proud of our security forces and agencies and the services rendered by them to the nation. We expect the Canadian authorities to address the situation appropriately," said Krishna. In response to a query from the media in Bangalore, Krishna said the Canadian high commissioner was summoned twice by the foreign office to be told about India's feelings. The home ministry went a step ahead and set a deadline of one week for the Canadians to come up with an "appropriate response" in order to avoid a tit-for-tat response from India. Official sources said Caron was told unequivocally that remarks against India's security forces were not acceptable. They, however, emphasized that India's grouse is not against the denial of visas to individuals, and that it recognizes that grant of visas is the prerogative of the host country. They said India was peeved with the completely unwarranted remarks against the security forces. But while the foreign ministry's response was nuanced and factored in friendly ties with Canada, home ministry was seething with resentment against the haughtiness of Canadian diplomats. It was Union home secretary G K Pillai, alerted by allegations levelled by Canadian high commission staffers, who wrote to foreign secretary Nirupama Rao about a fortnight ago, asking MEA to act tough with the Canadians. "We will give them some time to respond. However, if they don't respond in an appropriate manner, we will retaliate," said a home ministry official. While he did not elaborate, sources said one possible retaliation could be to prevent Canadian officials from entering Afghanistan via India. "We want the Canadian high commission to apologize, take back the comments made in the rejection letters and also initiate action against the officers responsible for rejecting visas," said a high-ranking official. The government seemed to have taken the matter very seriously because of the fact that a serving IB official, who is also the security liaison officer for PM Manmohan Singh, too was denied a Canadian visa recently. He was allowed to travel only after the foreign ministry intervened. The official will travel to Toronto with the PM for the G-20 summit next month. On Tuesday, while stating that the matter had been taken up strongly with Canada, Rao highlighted the fact that the Canadian foreign office had said that Canada

had the highest respect for India's democratic institutions and armed forces. The MEA was hoping that the matter would end there, but with more cases now being reported the issue is threatening to get out of control. While the Canadian foreign ministry was quick to respond in the case of ex-BSF constable Fateh Singh Pandher, who was the first to take up the matter with the government, there has been complete silence from their side since the others cases were reported. The MEA was earlier walking the tightrope considering India's overall friendly ties with Canada, but with the home ministry insisting on an apology from the Canadian authorities; it has been forced to convey that India will not tolerate such behaviour. Meanwhile, the issue seemed to have also sparked off a political storm with the BJP accusing the government of following a weak foreign policy. Even the Congress denied the Canadian denial of visas as "unfortunate". BJP spokesperson Ravi Shankar Prasad said, "We don't need any certificate from Canada for our armed forces but such incidents show that we are following a very weak foreign policy... Has India's foreign policy become so weak that a country like Canada is denying visa to top officials?" Earlier in the day, JD(U) chief and NDA convener Sharad Yadav said, "This kind of attitude by a country like Canada shows that India has become subservient to such countries. If the nation is strong then nobody can behave in such a manner with us. There is a need to strengthen India in front of the world." (Times of India)

### **Indian Occupied Kashmir:**

#### **Amnesty concludes Jammu & Kashmir visit**

A two-member delegation of Amnesty International concluded its six-day visit to Srinagar on Sunday. It held wide-ranging discussions with the government and the separatists but was denied permission to visit the jails. A statement by Amnesty International issued said the visit was aimed at securing a better understanding of the human rights situation in Jammu and Kashmir and to discuss Amnesty's future work in the region. This is its first visit to the Kashmir Valley in the last 20 years. During its six-day visit, the delegation met Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Leader of the Opposition Mehbooba Mufti, separatist leaders Syed Ali Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Yasin Malik, Javed Mir, Maulana Abdullah Tari, Abdul Ahad Parra and family members of detained leaders Shabir Ahmad Shah and Nayeem Ahmad Khan, besides organisations representing different sections of society. "The members of the delegation also conducted research on cases of preventive detention under the J&K Public Safety Act," the statement said. "The members met with former detainees and families of those currently in detention, the J&K Bar Association, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the State Human Rights Commission and various lawyers and journalists." Amnesty International said that in a meeting with top officials, the delegation raised concerns over the alleged misuse of the Public Safety Act. "A request to visit detainees lodged at the Central Jail, Srinagar, was denied by the officials but the Chief Minister later promised to consider it." Amnesty International, the statement said, would complete its ongoing research into preventive detentions and subsequently release its report on the issue. The focus of the research would be the Public Safety Act. Earlier during meeting with the delegation, Mr. Omar Abdullah said that allowing Amnesty to visit Kashmir was a clear indication of the fact that government believed in openness and transparency. The

government encouraged objective and fair analysis by all organisations concerned. On the basis of their suggestions, corrective measures could be taken wherever required. He said that the last two decades had seen turbulence in the Valley. "During this turmoil, innocent civilians suffered the most." Whenever any security man was found guilty of human rights violation, the government was never found lacking to punish the guilty. Both in cases of militancy and general law and order situation, the government adopted the legal and judicial route to deal with the accused. "There is no desire on the part of the government to thwart any legal process or deny any person his legal right," he said. He said recently a new culture of stone pelting had emerged in the Valley but with the cooperation of general public and Mohalla committees, the youngsters were persuaded to desist from it. Regarding issuance of passports, Mr. Abdullah said that he had directed Police Intelligence Department to issue no-objection certificates even to the kith and kin of militants if they were not involved in any militant activities. (The Hindu)

### **Just 2% of people in J&K want to join Pak: Survey**

For those who still think a plebiscite will tilt the status of Kashmir and that most Kashmiris yearn to wave the Pakistani green, there are now numbers for the first time to contradict these claims. A survey carried out across both Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, that its author claims is the first ever of its kind, shows that only 2% of the respondents on the Indian side favour joining Pakistan and most such views were confined to Srinagar and Budgam districts. In six of the districts surveyed late last year by researchers from the London-based thinktank Chatham House, not a single person favoured annexation with Pakistan, a notion that remains the bedrock for the hardline separate campaign in Kashmir. However, the study by Robert Bradrock, a scholar from London's Kings College, that involved interviewing 3,774 people in both parts of Kashmir in September-October 2009 showed that 44% of people on the Pakistani side favoured independence, compared to 43% in Indian Kashmir. Bradrock says in the 37-page report on the survey that this would put an end for all times to come to the plebiscite route as a possible way to resolve Kashmir, since the only two options envisaged under the UN resolutions proposing plebiscite in 1948/49 were for the whole of Kashmir to join either India or Pakistan; azadi was not an option. But in the Valley, the mood for azadi still remained strong, with 75%-95% respondents favouring that as a final resolution. The poll showed no support either for joint sovereignty or for maintaining status quo. However, more than 58% of those surveyed were prepared to accept the Line of Control as a permanent border if it could be liberalized for greater people-to-people contact and trade. Only 8% voted against making the LoC a permanent boundary, with the highest level of opposition in Anantnag district, the report said. Few people in Kashmir, compared to many more in PoK, believed that violence was likely to resolve the Kashmir issue. In J&K, only 20% thought that militant violence would help solve the problem, compared to nearly 40% who thought it was coming in the way of a resolution. In PoK, 37% of those surveyed held the view that violence was a possible route to resolution. That both the state legislative elections in 2008 and the Lok Sabha elections in 2009 had helped bring about a change in mindsets was seen in the increasingly high turnouts that Kashmir has posted in recent years. The survey too demonstrated that trend, with more than half the respondents saying the elections had improved chances for peace.

"The results aren't surprising at all. I feel they re-emphasize the need to look beyond traditional positions and evaluate the contours of a solution grounded in today's realities," said Sajjad Lone, a former ally of the Hurriyat who unsuccessfully contested the 2009 election. Peoples Democratic Party chief spokesman Naeem Akhtar said the azadi aspirations must be factored into any solution. "It can't be wished away and has to be configured into the future strategy on Kashmir. We've always been pleading to provide an alternative to the azadi sentiment." (Times of India)

### **Srinagar erupts over 'encounter' of three youths**

Hundreds of people took to the streets at Nadihal in North Kashmir's Baramulla district to protest the alleged killing of three missing youth in a "fake encounter" on Thursday. Residents alleged that the Army had killed Shahnawaz Ahmad Khan, Mohammed Shafi Lone and Riyaz Ahmad Lone and buried them in Kupwara district. SP Altaf Ahmad said police have started investigations into the case and arrested a surrendered militant, Bashir Ahmad Lone, and two of his accomplices for questioning. "The parents of the youth had lodged a missing complaint on May 10." The officer said cops were yet to confirm the incident, but the parents of the youth claimed that photographs of their mutilated bodies were published in a local daily after an encounter along the LoC in Kupwara. (Times of India)

### **Social front:**

#### **158 killed in Mangalore air crash, 8 survive**

In the country's worst air disaster in a decade, a Boeing 737 plane of Air India's low budget carrier overshot the airport runway and burst into flames killing 158 persons but eight others survived. As the Air India Express flight from Dubai came into land at the Bajpe airport at around 6.30 A.M Sat May 22 in cloudy weather but good visibility, it went beyond the touchdown area, broke up and caught fire even as some passengers jumped out. The aircraft, carrying 160 passengers and a crew of six, hit a concrete localiser instrument, a navigation aid, and fell into a ravine 200 to 300 metres deep. The passengers included four infants and 19 other children. (The Indian Express)

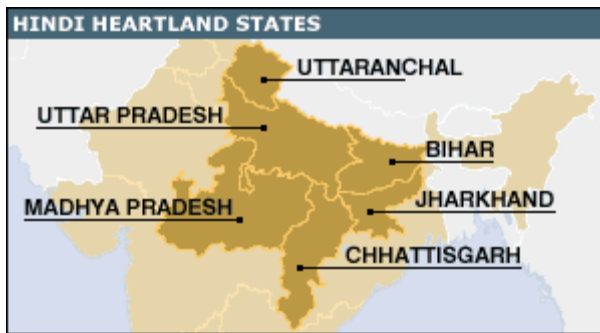
#### **Disparity in wages between male, female workers in rural India reduced**

UPA's flagship job guarantee scheme seems to have ensured better wages for women in rural India. An NSSO survey report released earlier this week revealed that disparity in wages between male and female workers in rural India had reduced between 2004-05 when there was no national rural employment guarantee scheme and 2007-08 when the scheme was introduced by UPA-1. In 2007-08, rural women working in NREGA areas were getting 54% higher wages than casual women workers in urban areas. Wages in rural areas were less than those in urban areas earlier but NREGA has changed the norm. The report pointed out that compared to an average daily wage of Rs 48.50 for a woman in urban areas, women enrolled under the NREGA scheme got Rs 79 every day in rural India. With the introduction of the scheme in rural India, the wage difference between men and women has also reduced. In urban India, where there is no job guarantee scheme, the disparity in wages between men and women has increased. Though the

scheme ensures higher wages to workers, the NSSO survey highlights that the wages being given are still less than Rs 100 per day stipulated by the government. As the survey was based on answers from respondents, it failed to provide reasons for the government failing to disburse the mandatory amount. Meanwhile, the report found that 92% of Indians were employed on a given day but finding work all year was still a challenge. (Times of India)

## **Regional Report**

### **Central India (Hindi Heartland)**



### **Politics:**

#### **BJP to withdraw support to Soren government**

Frustrated over Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) backtracking on its power-sharing deal in Jharkhand, the Bharatiya Janata Party has decided to withdraw support to the Shibu Soren government on Monday. "The BJP will withdraw support to JMM government tomorrow," BJP spokesman Sanjay Seth said on Sunday, a day after Mr. Soren asserted that he would continue as the Chief Minister and was in touch with the Congress. A BJP delegation will meet Governor M.O.H. Farooq and hand over the letter of withdrawal of support. (The Hindu)

#### **BJP a pariah in society?**

Madhya Pradesh BJP unit president, Prabhat Jha has asked party workers to ensure that they have acceptability in the society in which they work. "Unless BJP workers are accepted in the society, there can be no acceptance for the party as such," Jha said last evening while addressing the meeting of BJP office-bearers from seven districts at Ujjain. Apart from addressing office-bearers, Jha also held two meetings, one of which was in preparation for the civic elections to be held in Ujjain on June 23. The Ujjain civic elections pose a big challenge for Jha as the BJP has lost the polls on the last occasion. At this meeting, around 2,000 workers were present. Apart from them, former Union Minister, Satya Narayan Jatia also attended the meeting. He also addressed a meeting where senior BJP leaders including four who had worked with Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya were also present. (The Indian Express)

## **Social front:**

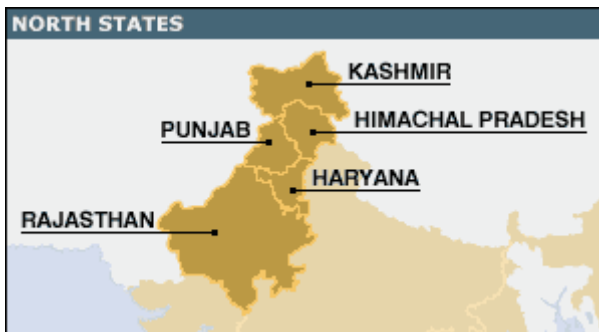
### **11 injured as 14 Rajdhani coaches derail**

Eleven passengers suffered minor injuries when 14 coaches of the Guwahati-bound Rajdhani Express derailed at Amba halt between Kharik and Naugachia railway stations in Bihar on Tuesday. Rail traffic has been disrupted on the section due to the derailment.

East Central Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Dilip Kumar said the derailment took place at village Amba around 6:30 am when the train was on way to Guwahati from New Delhi. The driver of the train applied emergency brakes after hearing the sound of an explosion on the tracks which apparently led to the derailment, Kumar said. However, the exact cause was still to be ascertained, the CPRO said, adding that the possibility of sabotage was also being examined. Police has denied suggestions that it was the handiwork of Maoists. (The Indian Express)

## **Economic Front:**

### **The North**

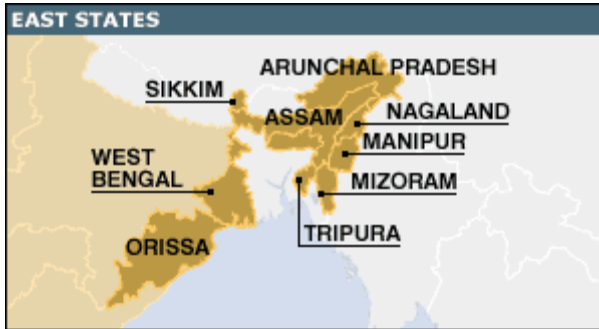


## **Politics:**

## **Social front:**

## **Economic Front:**

## The East



### Politics:

#### **Darjeeling on the boil after Gorkha leader is killed**

The movement for a separate state of Gorkhaland in the Darjeeling hills took an ugly turn when Madan Tamang, the outspoken veteran who headed the All India Gorkha League (AIGL), was hacked to death, allegedly by cadres of the rival Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM). Tamang was attacked with khukris in the heart of Darjeeling town around 9.30 am. His security guards opened fire, injuring three assailants. He was taken to the nearby Planters Club medical unit but by then he had bled to death. North Bengal IGP K L Tamta confirmed that the attack was carried out by GJM cadres. "We have arrested 18 people so far," he said. Tamang was getting ready to address an AIGL rally near Planters Club when nearly 150 GJM cadres turned up. The AIGL supporters fled, leaving Tamang alone. He was attacked almost immediately. The GJM cadres were said to have been accompanied by Gorkha Nari Mukti Morcha supporters. Tamta said policemen deployed there for the rally moved in and even fired blank rounds to scatter the GJM cadres. But the GJM denied any involvement in the attack, saying chief Bimal Gurung was away in Kalimpong, meeting workers. Roshan Giri, general secretary and GJM spokesman, denied any wrongdoing. "Fingers are being pointed at us but the GJM has nothing to do with violence. We condemn the incident. We have always ensured that the movement for a separate Gorkhaland is carried out in a democratic, peaceful manner. We are being defamed by those who want to destabilise the movement," Giri said. The killing of Tamang shut down Darjeeling and police contingents were back on the streets after months. Incidentally, Governor M K Narayanan is on vacation in Darjeeling until June 8. There was no immediate reaction from his office. The attack came just three days after Tamang led a delegation of Democratic Front supporters, an outfit launched on May 1 for "re-establishment of the rule of law in Darjeeling and restoration of the fundamental rights of the hill people". In New Delhi, the Home Ministry said the murder was a setback to talks being held between Gorkha leaders and the Centre. "This certainly vitiates the atmosphere for talks. There is need for people to keep calm and work towards a peaceful solution to the problem. All sides need to maintain peace," Home Secretary G K Pillai told reporters. The next round of talks was slated to happen towards the end of the month. (The Indian Express)

## Social front:

## Economic Front:

## The South



## Politics:

### **Rajya Sabha polls: Left, MDMK to back AIADMK**

The Left parties and the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam have decided to support the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in the Rajya Sabha elections next month. Communist Party of India (Marxist) State secretary G. Ramakrishnan, MDMK general secretary Vaiko and Communist Party of India State assistant secretary C. Mahendran handed over letters of support to AIADMK general secretary Jayalalithaa at her Poes Garden residence on Tuesday. Mr. Vaiko told newsmen that the AIADMK had sought the support of alliance partners in the Rajya Sabha election. "We have extended our support whole-heartedly," he said, adding that the AIADMK would field two candidates. Mr. Ramakrishnan said the AIADMK general secretary had sent a letter expressing a desire to field two candidates for the Rajya Sabha seats falling vacant in Tamil Nadu. As the Centre and State governments were following anti-people policies, the CPI(M) state executive committee had decided to support the AIADMK, he said. According to Mr. Mahendran, the CPI decided to support the AIADMK after considering the Rajya Sabha election from the standpoint of the continuing political struggle to defeat the Congress-DMK combine in the future. On why CPI State secretary D. Pandian, who was thought to be one of the contenders for the Rajya Sabha seat, was absent, Mr. Mahendran said that Mr. Pandian could not attend the meeting as he was out of station. Given the strength of the three parties in the Assembly, the AIADMK can win two of the six seats falling vacant. The AIADMK has 57 members, the CPI(M) nine, the CPI six and the MDMK three. A total of 34 votes are necessary to ensure a candidate is elected to the Rajya Sabha. The executive committee of the AIADMK is meeting on Thursday. (The Hindu)

## **Social front:**

### **Andhra couple stoned to death for 'honour'**

Honour killing isn't restricted to north India: a young Reddy girl and her Dalit husband were stoned to death on Wednesday night. Six people, including the parents of Baddam Swapna Reddy (22), were arrested and charged with murder on Thursday. Swapna, belonging to the high-caste Reddy community, married Sunkari Srinivas (28) about three months ago. The couple was found stoned to death on the outskirts of Krishnajiwadi village in Nizamabad. Swapna's father B Lal Reddy, mother Radha, uncle N Ram Reddy and three aunts - Yadava, Padma and Shoba - were all booked for murder and under SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act. Cops were deployed in the village after locals staged a dharna outside the girl's parents' house on Thursday. According to villagers, Srinivas who was first married to Savithri and has two daughters Nandini and Harini met Swapna, fell in love and the two got married at Vemalavada temple in Karimnagar district about three months ago. Srinivas hadn't divorced his first wife but she apparently had no objections to his second marriage. Fearing that their families would not accept their union, the couple began living in Hyderabad after their wedding. Srinivas, a trained computer mechanic, worked with a private firm. Locals said the couple returned to the village on Wednesday and tried to convince the elders in Swapna's family to accept their marriage. The girl's family members were still in a rage. Later in the day, they allegedly descended on Srinivas's house in the village and attacked the couple. Kamareddy DSP D Udaykumar Reddy said all the guilty in the double murder would be brought to book. Locals apprehend that those who carried out the crime belonged to the upper caste and hence would get away. "About 20 members of Swapna's family came barging into our house late last night, dragged them out and lynched them in front of me," said Savithri, Srinivas's first wife, who is now a witness to the death of her husband and his second wife. (Times of India)

## **Economic Front:**

### **West India**



## **Politics:**

## **Social front:**

### **40 killed in Gujarat heat wave**

At least 40 people have been killed in the heat wave in Gujarat in the last four days as the mercury continued to rise above 45 degrees Celsius in most parts of the State, barring coastal areas. The weather bureau said the severe heat wave conditions would continue at least for two more days. Idar town in Sabarkantha district, which registered the century's hottest day on May 21 with the mercury rising to a record 48.5 degrees C, recorded 46.8 degrees Celsius on Sunday. Deesa town in the neighbouring Banaskantha district also recorded a high of 46.2 degrees Celsius, while in Ahmedabad, the maximum temperature, which came down from Friday's 40 years' record-breaking high of 46.8 to 44.5 degrees Celsius on Saturday, rose again on Sunday to 45.8 degrees C. The temperature in Vadodara, Rajkot, Bhuj and most other towns recorded above 45 degrees while in Surat, a coastal city, the temperature was only 36.4 degrees Celsius. Nine persons died following sunstroke on Sunday with Ahmedabad alone accounting for four deaths, while two died in Mehsana and a 10-year old girl in Jhalod. Health Minister Jaynarayan Vyas admitted that government hospitals on an average were receiving 700 to 800 more patients a day during the last four days with sunstroke or other heat wave-related diseases, including gastroenteritis and food poisoning. With many of the natural water holes having dried up in the Gir forest, the only abode of the Asiatic Lions, the State government has created about 600 artificial water holes for the animals to quench their thirst. The voluntary organisations reported deaths of bats, crows and other birds due to heat wave. (The Hindu)

### **Fresh communal clashes in Ahmedabad's old city**

Fresh clashes were witnessed between members of two communities in Shahpur in which one woman was injured, police said. Members of the two communities pelted stones at each other and also torched some vehicles in Shahpur which falls in communally sensitive old city area, they said. Communal clashes were reported last night from the same area after a marriage procession took place near a Masjid during prayer time. Police said that one woman is injured in clashes and she has been rushed to hospital. The situation, however, was brought under control with deployment of troops in the night itself, but, somehow, again the groups resorted to stone pelting, they added. Fire brigade officials said that at least three fire tenders have been rushed to the spot so far. (The Indian Express)

## **Economic Front:**

### **State tops cotton production chart for fifth time in a row**

For the fifth consecutive year, Gujarat has registered the highest cotton production in the country. The production is likely to touch the 1 crore bales mark, way ahead of its nearest competitor, Maharashtra. But farmers, ginners and traders are keeping their fingers crossed due to the change in export policy and the introduction of mandatory licensing). Earlier, the government had enforced a month-long ban on export. According to figures released by the Cotton Corporation of India, production in Gujarat by May 15 touched

92.5 lakh bales, and by the end of the season, it is likely to touch the record 1 crore bales mark. Meanwhile, Maharashtra has registered a production of 60.75 lakh bales in the corresponding period, followed by Andhra Pradesh with 49 lakh bales. Gujarat accounts for 50 per cent of the country's total cotton export. Anand Popat, Secretary, Saurashtra Ginners Association, said: "We do not know how far we will be able to reap the benefits in the wake of the new licensing policy." Last week, following intense representation from farmers, ginners and traders, the Centre had lifted the total ban on exports. But now, instead of the textile ministry, the matter will be looked at by the commerce ministry, and traders will have to get their licence from the Director General of Foreign Trade. So far, cotton export did not require any licence. Traders were only required to register the deals with the textile ministry. Trader Bharat Patel said: "We are still waiting for the details of the licensing policy. We have kept our fingers crossed. We don't know yet what will be the licence fee or if there will be any quota or limit on export. The future of farmers, ginners and traders depend on the new policy." Popat said enforcing any limit or quota on export will affect the domestic prices. "Farmers and ginners might have to settle for low prices," he said. In view of the huge backlog, the Centre's move will be eagerly watched by the stakeholders. Before the ban on export, some 61 lakh bales were exported, and Gujarat's contribution was nearly half of it. Currently, farmers in Saurashtra have a backlog of around 20 lakh bales and ginners have some six lakh bales. The ban, which led to fall in prices, has hit the industry hard and is likely to affect the next crop pattern. Within a week of the ban, domestic cotton prices fell to Rs 685 per bale (20 kg) from Rs 715. "Future price will depend entirely on the export policy," Popat added. (The Indian Express)