

Weekly Country Report
India
16-22 June 2008

Terrorism

On 16 June 2008, the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Mumbai, Maharashtra arrested two members of the Hindu Jan-Jagruti Samiti, a local right-wing organization for the blast at Gadkari Rangayatan -a cinema auditorium in Thane, Maharashtra on 4 June 2008. The accused have been identified as Ramesh Gadkari and Mangesh Nikam. They claimed that they were protesting against the play “Amhi Paachpute,” and had planted the explosive to protest the “blasphemous” references to Hindu deities in the play.¹

Jammu and Kashmir (J&K)

A number of events from J&K dominated news this week. On 22 June 2008, four Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) militants and three members of security forces were killed in two separate encounters in Srinagar-Ganderbal road and Shopian district, J&K.²

This week, interrogation of three arrested militants on 14 June 2008 by police forces revealed that the Pakistan army had initiated a group of six men from Deoli training camp at Sialkot district, Pakistan to infiltrate into Samba district, J&K, India.³ Police sources claimed that all six militants belonged to Banihal, Ramban and Doda districts in J&K and they had been asked to proceed to Ramban and Banihal after trekking through infiltration routes of Basantar and Mansar, J&K.⁴

Police forces further claimed that at least 35 militants of Hizbul Mujahideen (the largest militant outfit operating in Jammu and Kashmir), most of who are Kashmiri locals are being trained by the Pakistan army at Deoli training camp in Pakistan.⁵ Although the level of infiltration is low overall, claims such as these continue to keep India-Pakistan relations over conflict resolution in Kashmir disturbed.

Maoist violence

Maoists continued to commit acts of violence this week. On 17 June 2008, Maoist militants disturbed a marriage function and killed the bridegroom before the guests at Koder village in the Maoist infested Bijapur district, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.⁶

¹ “Thane blast: 2 arrested”, *The Hindu*, 17/06/2008,
<http://www.hindu.com/2008/06/17/stories/2008061755671000.htm>

² “4 LeT militants killed in J&K”, *The Hindu*, 23/06/2008,
<http://www.hindu.com/2008/06/23/stories/2008062359911500.htm>

³ “Militants were launched from Deoli trg camp”, *Daily Excelsior*, 18/06/2008,
<http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/web1/08june18/index.html>

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

⁶ “Naxals storm marriage function, kill bridegroom”, *The Indian Express*, 18/06/2008,
<http://www.indianexpress.com/story/324217.html>

Also, on 18 June 2008, security forces and Maoist rebels had an encounter near Kondagaon in Kanker district. The paramilitary forces were attacked by the rebels on their way to Koder village, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.⁷

Northeastern India

The region was relatively peaceful this week except for one counter-insurgency operation. On 15 June 2008, security forces killed four United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) cadres in Sibsagar district, Assam.⁸

⁷ Ibid

⁸ “Army kills 4 ULFA militants in Assam”, *Asian Age*, 16/06/2008,
<http://www.asianage.com/presentation/leftnavigation/news/india/army-kills-4-ulfa-militants-in-assam.aspx>