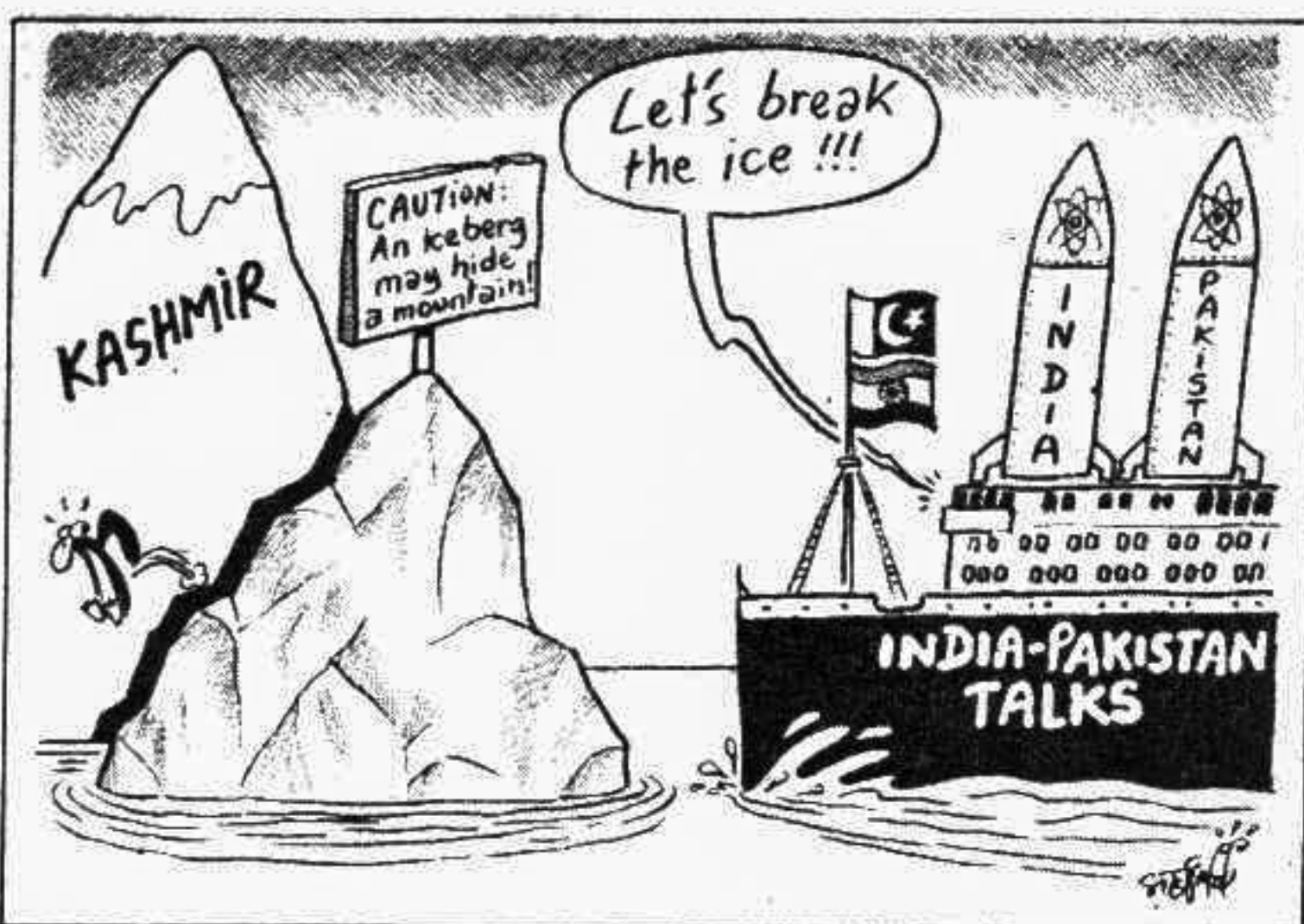


# The Hope Summit

India and Pakistan declare their intent to resolve all issues, reports P Jayaram from Lahore



THE historic India-Pakistan summit concluded in Lahore on Feb 21 with the two Prime Ministers issuing what has been termed as the Lahore Declaration and the two sides signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to put all issues of contention behind them.

The MoU spelt out the statement of intent of the two sides to intensify efforts to resolve all outstanding bilateral issues, including the Jammu and Kashmir question. Setting out the agenda for future negotiations, both countries laid particular stress on the nuclear matters. They agreed to engage in consultations on security matters, including nuclear doctrines, and initiating confidence building measures in both nuclear and conventional areas.

In a fitting finale to the two-day summit, Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif addressed a packed-to-the-brim press conference at the Governor's House in Lahore. Unwilling to be provoked by questions by Pakistani journalists, on the issue of "self-determination of Kashmiris", both Prime Ministers expressed their hope that these matters will be addressed in the bilateral negotiations as has been mentioned in both the joint statement and the MoU. The two countries agreed to continue their respective moratorium on further nuclear tests unless their supreme national interests were jeopardised by extraordinary events.

The two sides shall continue to abide by their respective bilateral moratorium on conducting further nuclear tests explosions unless either side, in exercise of its national sovereignty, decides that extraordinary events have jeopardised its supreme interests," the MoU said. The MoU was signed by Indian Foreign Secretary K. Raghunath and his Pakistani counterpart, Shamshad Ahmad, in the presence of Vajpayee and Sharif. Though the two arch rivals of the subcontinent failed to put the nuclear genie back in the bottle, they agreed on a range of measures to avoid an accidental nuclear confrontation between them. The MoU said the two sides were fully committed to undertaking national measures to reduce the risks of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons under their respective control.

"The two sides further undertake to notify each other immediately in the event of any accidental, unauthorised or unexplained incident that could create the risk of a fallout with adverse consequences for both sides, or an outbreak of nuclear war between the two countries, as well as to adopt measures aimed at diminishing the possibility of such actions, or such incidents being misinterpreted by the other," the MoU said.

Towards this end, they would identify and establish the appropriate communication mechanism for this purpose, it added. The two sides also undertook to provide each other with advance notification in respect of ballistic missile flight tests and to conclude a bilateral agreement in this regard. "The two sides shall engage in bilateral consultations on security concepts and nuclear doctrines with a view to developing measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at avoidance of conflict," the MoU said.

Later, addressing a news conference jointly with Sharif, Vajpayee said in response to a question the issue of signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was discussed by them, but no decision was taken. The two Prime Ministers signed a Lahore Declaration, marking Vajpayee's visit, asserting their commitment to bring about peace and stability between their countries and progress and prosperity to their peoples.

The declaration said they agreed that their respective governments would intensify their

efforts to resolve all issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir and to refrain from intervention and interference in each other's internal affairs. They also reaffirmed their "condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and their determination to combat this menace and promote and protect all human rights and fundamental rights."

This was as far as they could go on the explosive issue of Kashmir, where India accuses Pakistan of arming, aiding and abetting terrorism, a charge denied by Islamabad. Pakistan, which says that it only provides "moral and political support to the Kashmiri freedom fighters", accuses the Indian security forces of committing largescale human rights violations in Kashmir. The declaration also said that the two governments would take immediate steps for reducing the risk of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons. It said they would discuss concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at prevention of conflict.

They also reaffirmed their commitments to the goals and objectives of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to improve the quality of life for the people of the region, home to one-fifth of humanity and among the poorest in the world.

The MoU, which concentrated mainly on nuclear-related issues, said the two sides would engage in bilateral consultations on security, disarmament and non-proliferation issues within the context of negotiations on these in the multilateral fora. They also agreed to review the existing communication links, like the one between those in charge of military operations with a view to upgrading and improving them and to provide for "fail-safe and secure communications."

A joint statement issued at the end of Vajpayee's visit said the foreign ministers of the two countries would meet periodically to discuss all issues of mutual concern, including nuclear related issues. The two countries also agreed to undertake consultations on World Trade Organisation (WTO) related issues with a view to coordinating their respective positions and cooperate in information technology, in particular for tackling the problem of Y2K, the millennium date-change problem for computers worldwide that has defied a solution so far.

They also decided to hold consultations with a view to further liberalising the visa and travel regime. Sharif, who described his talks with Vajpayee as "substantive and constructive", rejected a suggestion that the Kashmir problem had not been given sufficient importance in the Lahore Declaration. "It is one of the most important points in the Declaration," he said. Asked if India would consider granting the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir, Vajpayee said the question of Kashmir was being discussed under the agenda accepted by the two sides. "The discussions are going on. It is very difficult for me to say what solution will emerge," he said.

Asked if they were disappointed that they could not "deliver more", particularly since both had described the meeting as "historic", Sharif noted that the Lahore Declaration made it clear that both governments would intensify efforts to resolve all issues, including Kashmir.

Vajpayee said the documents reflected the areas of understanding. "We must now implement our various understanding in good faith." He said though his visit was brief it was substantive and added that he was moved by the hospitality of the Pakistani Prime Minister and his people. He invited Sharif and his wife to visit India to give him a chance to return to hospitality.

— India Abroad News Service

# Text of Documents Signed at Lahore

THE following is the text of the documents signed at the conclusion of the Indian Prime Minister's visit to Lahore on Sunday.

## Lahore declaration

The prime ministers of the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan:-

Sharing a vision of peace and stability between their countries, and of progress and prosperity for their people; Convinced that durable peace and development of harmonious relations and friendly cooperation will serve the vital interests of the peoples of the two countries, enabling them to devote their energies for a better future;

Recognizing that the nuclear dimension of the security environment of the two countries adds to their responsibility for avoidance of conflict between the two countries;

Committed to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and the universally accepted principles of peaceful co-existence;

Reiterating the determination of both countries to implementing the Simla Agreement in letter and spirit;

Committed to the objectives of universal nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation;

Convinced of the importance of mutually agreed confidence building measures for improving the security environment;

Recalling their agreement of 23 September, 1998, that an environment of peace and security is in the supreme national interest of both sides and that the resolution of all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, is essential for this purpose;

Have agreed that their respective governments:-

- shall intensify their efforts to resolve all issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir;

- shall refrain from intervention and interference in each other's internal affairs;

- shall intensify their composite and integrated dialogue process for an early and positive outcome of the agreed bilateral agenda;

- shall take immediate steps for reducing the risk of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons and discuss concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at prevention of conflict;

- reaffirm their commitment to the goals and objectives of SAARC and to concert their efforts towards the realization of the SAARC vision for the year 2000 and beyond with a view to promoting the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life through accelerated economic growth, social progress and cultural development;

- reaffirm their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and their determination to combat this menace;

- shall promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee

Prime Minister of the Republic of India

Muhammad Nawaz Sharif

Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Joint statement

In response to an invitation by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Pakistan from 20-21 February, 1999, on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore bus service.

2. The prime minister of Pakistan received the Indian prime minister at the Wagah border on 20 February 1999. A banquet in honour of the Indian Prime Minister and his delegation was

hosted by the Prime Minister of Pakistan at Lahore Fort, on the same evening. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Minar-i-Pakistan, Mausoleum of Allama Iqbal, Gurudawara Dera Sahib and Samadhi of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. On 21st February, a civic reception was held in honour of the visiting Prime Minister at the Governor's House.

3. The two leaders held discussions on the entire range of bilateral relations, regional cooperation within SAARC, and issues of international concern. They decided that:-

a) The two Foreign Ministers will meet periodically to discuss all issues of mutual concern, including nuclear related issues.

b) The two sides shall undertake consultations on WTO related issues with a view to coordinating their respective positions.

c) The two sides shall determine areas of cooperation in Information Technology, in particular for tackling the problems of Y2K.

d) The two sides will hold consultations with a view to further liberalizing the visa and travel regime.

e) The two sides shall appoint a two-member committee at ministerial level to examine humanitarian issues relating to civilian detainees and missing POWs.

4. They expressed satisfaction on the commencement of a bus service between Lahore and New Delhi, the release of fishermen and civilian detainees and the renewal of contacts in the field of sports.

5. Pursuant to the directive given by the two Prime Ministers, the Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 21 February 1999, identifying measures aimed at promoting an environment of peace and security between the two countries.

6. The two Prime Ministers signed the Lahore Declaration embodying their shared vision of peace and stability between their countries and of progress and prosperity for their peoples.

7. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee extended an invitation to Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to visit India on mutually convenient dates.

8. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality extended to him and members of his delegation and for the excellent arrangements made for his visit.

Memorandum of Understanding

The foreign secretaries of India and Pakistan:-

Reaffirming the continued commitment of their respective governments to the principles and purposes of the UN Charter;

Reiterating the determination of both countries to implementing the Simla Agreement in letter and spirit;

Guided by the agreement between their Prime Ministers of 23 September 1998 that an environment of peace and security is in the supreme national interest of both sides and that resolution of all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, is essential for this purpose;

Pursuant to the directive given by their respective Prime Ministers in Lahore, to adopt measures for promoting a stable environment of peace, and security between the two countries;

Have on this day, agreed to the following:-

1. The two sides shall engage in bilateral consultations on security concepts, and nuclear doctrines, with a view to developing measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at avoidance of conflict.

2. The two sides undertake to provide each other with advance notification in respect of ballistic missile flight tests, and shall conclude a bilateral agreement in this regard.

3. The two sides are fully committed to undertaking national measures to reducing the risks of accidental or unauthorised

use of nuclear weapons under their respective control. The two sides further undertake to notify each other immediately in the event of any accidental, unauthorised or unexplained incident that could create the risk of a fallout with adverse consequences for both sides, or an outbreak of nuclear war between the two countries, as well as to adopt measures aimed at diminishing the possibility of such actions, or such incidents being misinterpreted by the other. The two sides shall identify/establish the appropriate communication mechanism for this purpose.

4. The two sides shall continue to abide by their respective unilateral moratorium on conducting further nuclear test explosions unless either side, in exercise of its national sovereignty, decides that extraordinary events have jeopardised its supreme interests.

5. The two sides shall conclude an agreement on prevention of incidents at sea in order to ensure safety of navigation by naval vessels, and aircraft belonging to the two sides.

6. The two sides shall periodically review the implementation of existing Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and where necessary, set up appropriate consultative mechanisms to monitor and ensure effective implementation of these CBMs.

7. The two sides shall undertake a review of the existing communication links (e.g. between the respective Directors-General, Military Operations) with a view to upgrading and improving these links, and to provide for fail-safe and secure communications.

8. The two sides shall engage in bilateral consultations on security, disarmament and non-proliferation issues within the context of negotiations on these issues in multilateral fora.

Where required, the technical details of the above measures will be worked out by experts of the two sides in meetings to be held on mutually agreed dates, before mid 1999, with a view to reaching bilateral agreements.

(K. Raghunath)

Foreign Secretary of the Republic of India

(Shamshad Ahmad)

Foreign Secretary of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Courtesy: The Dawn of Pakistan

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