

**OPENING STATEMENT OF THE HOME MINISTER AT THE PRESS
CONFERENCE ON MARCH 2, 2010**

I present before you the report of the Ministry of Home Affairs for the month of February, 2010.

Internal Security

2. A peaceful 14-month period was rudely interrupted by a bomb blast in Pune on February 13, 2010 that resulted in 17 deaths and injuries to 55 persons. Intelligence alerts had been issued on September 19, October 10, December 7 and December 12, 2009. The police had made security arrangements in the Koregaon park area and, especially, for the Osho Ashram and the Chabad House. On October 9, 2009, the Pune police had issued a written advisory to all establishments in that area, including the German bakery, for enhancing security. This was reissued on December 25, 2009. Despite these measures, a bomb was successfully exploded in the German bakery. The case is being investigated by the ATS, Maharashtra.

3. I would like to recall what I said in the course of a lecture on December 23, 2009. I said, "However, there is the danger of a terror-free year inducing complacency, signs of which can be seen everywhere. A strange passivity seems to have descended upon the people." I would like to once again caution against complacency and advise greater vigilance. Shops, establishments, businesses, schools, colleges, hospitals etc. and, above all, the people must be ever vigilant and take measures that will complement the measures taken by the police to provide security.

4. The Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan met on February 25, 2010 at New Delhi. Three dossiers prepared by the Ministry of Home Affairs were handed over by our Foreign Secretary to the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. We expect Pakistan to take action against the persons mentioned in the three dossiers.

5. The Home Minister of Maldives called on me on February 3, 2010.

6. Mr. Robert Mueller, Director, FBI called on me on February 23, 2010. Our discussions were useful and centered on the case of David Headley and on intelligence sharing.

7. The third conference of Chief Ministers, after I took over as Home Minister, was held on February 7, 2010. Based on the responses to the 15-point questionnaire circulated ahead of the conference, we have been able to construct a base line of the capacity and preparedness of the police in each State. It will be my endeavour to encourage the States to improve upon the base line and enhance both capacity and preparedness to deal with the challenges to security. What was noteworthy about the conference was that there was not a single discordant voice. This sense of oneness of purpose augurs well for the future.

Jammu & Kashmir

8. On February 17, 2010, I visited Jammu and attended a meeting of the Unified Command.

9. A BSF jawan, suspected to have killed a protestor in J&K, was suspended and handed over to the J&K Police.

Naxalism

10. I visited Kolkata on February 9, 2010. There was a joint meeting with the Chief Ministers of West Bengal and Orissa, the two Deputy Chief Ministers of Jharkhand and officials of the Bihar Government. We reviewed the progress of the anti-naxalite drive in the four States, with special emphasis on inter-State operations. The Chief Minister of Jharkhand, who could not attend the meeting at Kolkata, called on me on February 25, 2010. He reaffirmed his Government's total support to the strategy worked out by the Chief Ministers of the seven naxal-affected States in January and August, 2009 and to the decisions taken at Kolkata on February 9, 2010.

11. On February 22, 2010, the media reported a statement purported to have been made by Koteswar Rao @ Kishenji, on behalf of the CPI (Maoist), offering to talk to the Government on condition that the Government (Centre and States) suspended their anti-naxal operations for 72 days. It was a somewhat bizarre offer. Many weeks ago, I had offered to facilitate talks with the CPI (Maoist) provided they abjured violence. There was no meaningful response to that offer. Nevertheless, on February 23, 2010 I responded that if the CPI (Maoist) made a short, simple and unconditional statement that they would abjure violence, Government would be prepared to hold talks with them. I have received no response to my statement.

12. I just described the so-called offer of the CPI (Maoist) as bizarre. That is because, barely 3 hours after the so-called offer, the CPI (Maoist) attacked a joint patrol party of the West Bengal police and the CRPF in PS Lalgah, district West Midnapore. The patrol party retaliated and three people were killed. In the 7 days since then, there have been 18 significant acts of violence in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal. These include landmine blasts, killing of civilians alleged to be police informers, attack on police parties, ambushing of trucks and other vehicles, and blasting of school buildings. I may point out that eleven lives have been lost including that of Inspector Ravi Lahan Mitra of PS Saranga, West Bengal.

North-East

13. A team of the NSCN (IM) led by Shri Thuingaleng Muivah, General Secretary, has arrived in New Delhi to hold talks with the Government of India. We have appointed Shri R.S. Pandey, IAS (Retd.) as the Interlocutor

of the Government of India for the Naga peace talks. It is my earnest desire that the talks will lead to an honourable negotiated settlement.

14. In Assam, 412 cadres of Karbi Longri NC Hills Liberation Front (KLNLFF) laid down arms on February 11, 2010. They deposited 162 weapons, ammunition and explosives.

15. The Regional Coordination Mechanism to facilitate 24x7 sharing and follow-up of information among the North Eastern States has become operational. After all the nodes of the SMACs in the North-East are networked, connectivity would be provided to 40 most sensitive districts in that region.

UA(P)A

16. On February 5, 2010, a notification was made under Section 3(1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 extending the declaration of the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) as an 'unlawful association'.

CPMFs

17. Under the Modernisation of Police Forces Scheme, a sum of Rs. 46.21 crore was released to various States in February 2010, taking the total sum released so far to Rs. 1,001.85 crore (against a Budget provision (RE) of Rs. 1230 crore).

18. Sanction was accorded on February 5, 2010 for the procurement of 650 Hand-Held Thermal Imagers (HHTI) for the BSF from M/s BEL at a cost of Rs. 112 crore. On February 9, 2010, sanction was accorded for the procurement of 2,464 VHF Radio sets for the BSF at a cost of Rs. 11.12 crore.

19. Sanctions amounting to Rs. 60.67 crore were issued for acquisition of land and construction of buildings/barracks for CPMFs: -

BSF	:	Rs. 35.88 crore
Assam Rifles	:	Rs. 15.43 crore
CRPF	:	Rs. 1.99 crore
ITBP	:	Rs. 7.37 crore

20. Approvals for paramedical staff for a 200-bed Referral Hospital, six 100-bed Composite Hospitals and thirty-two 50-bed Composite Hospitals were issued on February 11, 2010.

21. Orders were issued on February 26, 2010 enhancing the period of contractual appointment of General Duty Medical Officers (GDMOs) in CPMFs from one year to three years and the upper age limit from 60 to 65 years.

22. To enhance levels of efficiency and speed of decision-making the following powers have been delegated to DGs of CPMFs:

- Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs) to be presided over by the DGs without seeking MHA permission in individual cases, except in cases of special DPCs.
- For appointment/deputation/induction to NSG upto the level of Commandant.
- All pay fixation cases including those of re-employed pensioners from the Army or that of serving/retired officers of Army on deputation to CPMFs.

23. KLPs for a Group Centre and a Range Headquarter of CRPF each at Taralu in Bangalore and Kootah in Jammu were issued on February 8, 2010.

24. An exercise to rationalize posts in the grades of SI/Exe, ASI/Exe and HC/GD for the CISF was undertaken. This was done to lower the age profile of ASI/Exe. As a result of the exercise, on February 9, 2010, 2,857 additional posts of ASI/Exe were notified and corresponding reductions were made in the ranks of SI/Exe and HC/GD.

Border Management

25. *India-Bangladesh Border:* 47 kms of fencing and 83 kms of road work were completed in February 2010 under phase II of the project. 123 kms of fencing were replaced in February 2010 under phase III of the project. Poles for floodlighting were erected on a length of 95 kms and cables were laid on a length of 45 kms during the month.

26. *India-China Border:* 2.38 kms of formation works and 3.59 kms of surfacing works were completed during February, 2010.

27. *Border Area Development Programme (BADP):* A sum of Rs. 79.84 crore was released to Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, J&K, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal during February, 2010.

28. *Coastal Security:* Fourteen more boats were supplied by Goa Shipyard Ltd (6 boats) and Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (8 boats) during February, 2010. Thus, during the current year, a total of 92 boats have been supplied by the two shipyards against a target of 126 boats to be supplied by March, 2010. Some more will be delivered in the month of March 2010. At the request of the two shipyards, time has been extended up to April 2010 to deliver the remaining boats.

Immigration:

29. On February 20, 2010, I visited Attari to inaugurate work on the first Integrated Check Post on the India-Pakistan border.

30. Out of 42 Immigration Check Posts (ICPs), computer systems have been installed in 30 ICPs so far, including 13 that were installed in February, 2010.

31. Orders regarding relaxation of the Protected Area Permit (PAP) regime in respect of Himachal Pradesh were issued on February 24, 2010. A review is under way in respect of Rajasthan.

IPS Cadre

32. Shri S.C. Sinha (IPS: HY 1975) was appointed DG NIA with effect from February 10, 2010.

States/UTs

33. The Cabinet approved the Daman & Diu Civil Courts (Amendment) Regulation, 2009 on February 4, 2010. The Cabinet also approved, on February 25, 2010, the Dadra and Nagar Haveli (Civil Courts and Miscellaneous Provisions) (Amendment) Regulation, 2009.

34. 9484 permanent shelters for Tsunami affected people have been constructed so far against a target of 9797 permanent shelters in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

35. Sanction for the release of Rs. 267.64 lakh to the UT of Dadra & Nagar Haveli under the Police Modernisation Scheme was issued on February 25, 2010.

36. A five-member Committee chaired by Mr. Justice (Retd.) B.N. Srikrishna was constituted on February 3, 2010 for consultations on the situation in Andhra Pradesh.

37. The assent of the President was given to the following Legislative proposals:

- The Tamil Nadu Rosewood Trees (Conservation) Amendment Bill, 2010
- The Shimla Road Users & Pedestrians (Public Safety & Convenience) Amendment Bill, 2009
- The Tripura Lokayukta Bill, 2008

Other Initiatives

38. 132,000 files of freedom fighters' pension cases have been digitized so far, including 13,500 files that were completed in February, 2009. The data

base of living freedom fighters' pension records has 42,000 records, of which 7,000 were added in the month of February, 2010.

39. Approval in-principle was given to the Government of Tamil Nadu to incur an expenditure of Rs.29.70 crore for augmenting the infrastructure facilities in the Sri Lankan refugee camps in Tamil Nadu.

40. The work of direct data collection for the National Population Register (NPR) in the coastal villages of 8 States and 2 Union Territories is in progress. The biographical details of about 85 lakh persons and the biometric details of about 33 lakh persons have been collected so far. Cabinet has approved the creation of NPR for coastal areas and issue of identity cards to usual residents.
