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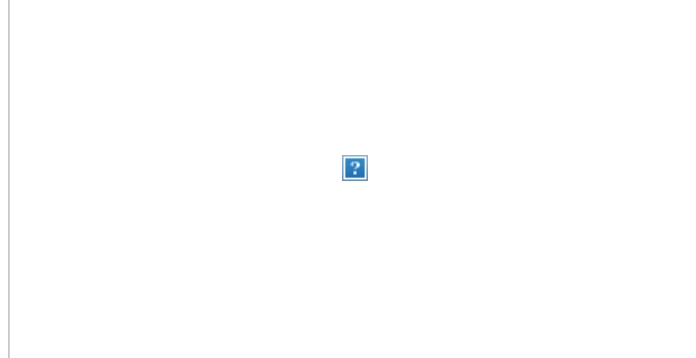
India demands strong, swift action

New Delhi lodges formal protest; foreign ministry summons Pak HC

Tuesday, December 02, 2008
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India demands strong, swift action



NEW DELHI: India's foreign ministry on Monday summoned Pakistan's high commissioner to lodge an official protest over the Mumbai attacks and demanded of Pakistan to take swift action over the deadly attacks, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said.

In New Delhi's first formal complaint to Islamabad, High Commissioner Shahid Malik was handed a message concerning Pakistan's alleged "failure to curb terrorism emanating from its soil."

"The high commissioner of Pakistan was called to the ministry of external affairs this evening. He was informed that the recent terrorist attacks on Mumbai were carried out by elements from Pakistan," a statement said.

"It was conveyed to the Pakistan high commissioner that Pakistan's actions needed to match the sentiments expressed by its leadership that it wishes to have a qualitatively new relationship with India," the statement said.

"He was informed that the recent terrorist attack on Mumbai was carried out by elements from Pakistan. The government expects that strong action would be taken against those elements, whosoever they may be, responsible for this outrage," it said.

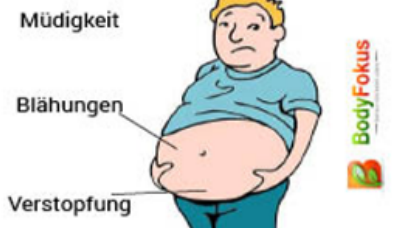
Meanwhile, Indian investigators said the militants who attacked Mumbai underwent months of commando training in Pakistan. Also, India's deputy interior minister said the Mumbai attackers were all from Pakistan. The comments from Deputy Home Minister Shakeel Ahmad were the strongest yet pointing a finger of blame across the border.

"We are not saying that it is sponsored by the Pakistan government," he told the BBC, adding that Pakistani soil was nevertheless being used for "anti-India" activities. "The terrorists who have been killed in these

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encounters in Mumbai in the last few days were of Pakistani origin," Ahmad said.

Besides, India's Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma told AFP that the Mumbai attacks had dealt a "grave setback" to relations with Pakistan. "What has happened is a grave setback to the process of normalisation of relations and the confidence-building measures with Pakistan," he said.

Sharma said the gunmen were "all from Pakistan" and stressed that it was time Islamabad delivered on its promise to prevent the Pakistani soil being used for attacks on India. Also, two senior Indian investigators told Reuters on condition of anonymity that evidence from the interrogation of Azam Amir Kasav, the only gunman of the 10 not killed by commandos, showed that Pakistani militants had a hand in the attack.

The clean-shaven, 21-year-old with fluent English was photographed during the attack wearing a black T-shirt emblazoned with the Versace logo. He has said his team took orders from "their command in Pakistan", police officials said.

The training was organised by the Lashkar-e-Taiba militant group, and conducted by a former member of the Pakistani Army, a police officer close to the interrogation told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, the chief minister of the Indian state of Maharashtra offered to resign on Monday after his deputy stepped down over the attacks on Mumbai. "I have offered to resign," Vilasrao Deshmukh told reporters.

"If the responsibility of the attacks is on the chief minister, then I will go. The final decision is with the high command," he said, referring to the leadership of the ruling Congress Party. Meanwhile, Mumbai is limping to normality.

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