

Control Arms India Update

A Monthly Newsletter from Control Arms Foundation of India (CAFI)

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Control Arms Foundation of India, formerly known as India Working Group on Arms Control was established on 10th September 2004 in New Delhi. The Foundation functions at an all India level and consists of noted academics, lawyers, journalists, former military personnel and human rights activists. The aim of the Foundation is to address issues of control arms, small arms light weapons proliferation, IEDs, women and disarmament and conducting research on India's defence policies and military expenditure. The Foundation aspires to create a movement in the sub-continent where defence and military issues no longer remains a department where the public has no say.

The Control Arms India Update brings news, views and analyses on issues pertaining to SALWIEDS - meaning small arms, light weapons and IEDS (Integrated Explosive Devices) and will also cover issues on gun running, human rights violations due to arms by both state and non-state actors, arms transfers, military expenditure and defence policies pertaining to Indian sub-continent. This is the fifth issue of the newsletter.

This is a special issue of the newsletter that is focused on continuing rise in use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) to commit acts of terror in India. The reason for doing this is because of the three multiple bomb blasts that occurred in Delhi on 29 October. CAFI also looks at various IED blasts that have happened in other parts of India in October 2005

But first of all, we at CAFI would like to share few basic facts about IEDs.

What are IED's ?

An IED is a "homemade" device that is designed to cause death or injury by using explosives alone or in combination with toxic chemicals, biological toxins, or radiological material. IEDs can be produced in varying sizes, functioning methods, containers, and delivery methods. IEDs can utilize commercial or military explosives, homemade explosives, or military ordnance and ordnance components. They are unique in nature because the IED builder has had to improvise with the materials at hand. Designed to defeat a specific target or type of target, they generally become more difficult to detect and protect against as they become more sophisticated.

IEDs fall into three types of categories: (1) Package Type IED (2) Vehicle-Borne IEDs (VBIEDs) (3) Suicide Bomb IED . Though they can widely in shape and form, IEDs share a common set of components and consist of the following: An initiation system or fuze; Explosive fill; A detonator; A power supply for the detonator; and A container.

IEDs can be :

- Thrown from overpasses.
- Thrown in front of approaching vehicles from roadside.
- Usually thrown by males—who are not always adults.

- Emplaced in potholes (covered with dirt).
- Emplaced along MSRs and alternate supply routes (targeting vehicles).
- Employed along unimproved roads (targeting patrols).
- Employed with 120-mm and larger artillery or mortar projectiles.
- Found alone or in groups.
- IEDs behind which are placed cinder blocks or piles of sand to direct blast into the kill zone.
- Command detonated—either by wire or remote device.
- Time-delay triggered IEDs. IEDs that can be detonated by cordless phone from a car (allows for mobile firing platform and prevents tracing or triangulation).

According to Mallika Joseph and Suba Chandran of Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, of all the weapons that the militants possess, IEDs, coupled with explosives like RDX, pose the greatest danger to human and material security due to the ease with which they can be made, planted and blasted. RDX, also known as cyclo-trimethylene-trinitramine is the most widely used explosive and forms the bulk of the explosives seized by the Indian Army in Kashmir. Detonating at 9600 m/sec and reaching 3300 degrees temperature, it is the ultimate non-nuclear explosive available to militants. RDX, neither commercially available in the region nor known to be locally produced, remains an exclusively military explosive. IEDs have become the favorite of the non-state actors replacing pistols and machine guns. This change has been effected due to developments within militant organizations coupled with the advantages offered by IEDs in comparison to small arms. Procuring sophisticated arms has become a costly proposition and there is also a demand and supply gap. In this situation, IEDs become the natural choice for NSAs whilst saving on human resources: whilst earlier, militants would have required more manpower and firepower to ambush a security convoy, with likely casualties to themselves, now a single strategically placed IED can attack the same convoy more effectively in terms of inflicting casualties without causing any damage to the militants themselves or requiring them to use much manpower or firepower. The added advantage of an IED, when compared to any other small arms, is that it is virtually impossible to detect them in an unassembled form with two or more militants carrying different components. This is particularly useful in high security risk areas like Kashmir where searching is frequent. Another advantage is that IEDs being target specific, will not alienate from the public the NSA, which is crucial for their continued operations in the area.

Source : globalsecurity.org and *ipcs*

IEDs are becoming a common material for insurgents and terrorists. The following news pieces collated from across India will point in this direction :

Serial Blasts in Delhi kills 70

At least 70 persons were killed and several injured in three powerful serial explosions that happened in New Delhi on October 29. While two bombs went off at busy market places, one exploded inside a Delhi Transport Corporation bus. Following the explosions, suspected to have been caused by Improvised Explosive Devices, a countrywide red alert was sounded. RDX was suspected to have been used in the bombs.

Source : *The Hindu*, 30 October 2005

Soldier killed, 30 wounded in highway explosion in Jammu & Kashmir

In a major IED explosion on Srinagar-Baramulla highway, militants today left one soldier dead and 30 others wounded when they targeted a bus of the Border Security Force (BSF). Informed sources told the Excelsior that militants blasted a white colour Maruti car at Omarabad, near Lawaypora, on Srinagar-Baramulla highway at 1445 hours. With spectacular precision, the militants in ambush targeted a BSF bus which was severely ripped apart. DIG BSF K Srinivasan

maintained that one soldier got killed and 20 others injured who were all evacuated, rushed to Srinagar and admitted to 92 Base Hospital at the headquarters of Army's 15 Corps. Defence sources said, late tonight, that all the injured soldiers were stable and they were responding to the treatment. Officials said that in addition to 20 BSF soldiers, 10 civilian pedestrians and shopkeepers sustained injuries in the explosion. They too were rushed to Srinagar and admitted to two civil hospitals for treatment

Source : *Daily Excelsior*, 27 October 2005

Northeast India IEDs Watch : Manipur Two women hurt in Indo-Burma border IED blast

At least two women sustained injuries when an IED suspected to be planted by underground elements exploded near the old power house at Moreh at the Indo-Burma border. The two injured women in the IED blast at Moreh were identified as Lungzahat Vaiphei, 40, wife of Paothang Baite and Wacin Mate, 35, wife of Holkai Mate. Both hail from Moreh. They received injuries by the splinters and were evacuated to Moreh community health centre. The bomb blasted when troops of the 24 Assam Rifles were conducting their normal ROP duty along the NH-39 and reached near the Moreh power house. However, none of the AR personnel were hurt in the blast.

According to a release from the AR, the IED exploded near the trade centre, Moreh at around 5.30 am. The IED was planted at the base of a tree. The injured civilians were attended by the medical officers of the AR and provided first aid. They also administered stitches on the spot, the release said. Reiterating that this was the second blast since yesterday, the statement further stated that due to the continuous relentless operations by the AR the militants were on the run.

Source : *Imphal Free Press*, October 25, 2005

IED blast in Imphal

An IED apparently planted by underground elements exploded in Manipur on October 23 near the Regional Tasar research Centre, Shangakpham, under Heingang police station. There were no casualties in the explosion even as a large pit was formed at the spot after the explosion.

Source : *The Imphal Free Press*, October 24, 2005

15 hurt in Grenade blast

15 persons, including three CRPF soldiers and a cop were injured in a grenade blast at Batmaloo in Jammu and Kashmir. Local news agency CNS quoting police said militants hurled a grenade near Hotel Akbar, however, the grenade missed the target and exploded on the road injuring 15 persons. Claiming responsibility of the blast, a spokesman of Al-Mansurain told CNS that four soldiers were killed in the incident

Source : *Greater Kashmir*, 22 October 2005

Search for IEDs leads to road blockade in Manipur

The movement of all kinds of vehicles passing through Khudengthabi was blocked by the Assam Rifles to let the 24th AR conducted search operations for IEDs along the stretch of NH-39 from Khudengthabi to Kwatha Lamkhai. The search operation was conducted in the aftermath of an exchange of fire between some underground elements and the AR troops yesterday at around 10.30 pm. The exchange of fire reportedly lasted around 20 minutes, according to a report. According to an AR source, the unknown suspected militants opened fire while the column of 24th AR were conducting foot patrolling in the area. The personnel of AR retaliated resulting in a heavy exchange of fire for around 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, another report said that before the unknown underground elements opened fire towards the AR, an IED which was planted at the roadside exploded at the spot. In the follow up action, the AR also reportedly detected two more IED from nearby spots. In the meantime, all the Moreh bound Imphal and Imphal bound vehicles originating from Moreh were blocked by the AR personnel at Khudengthabi as search operation for more IED was in progress.

Source : *Imphal Free Press*, October 21, 2005

Explosives in Doda and Rajouri Districts

One Army jawan was killed and three others were injured when a grenade exploded as the soldiers were cleaning their weapons at 120 Brigade in Bhimber Gali in Poonch district. Official sources said Lance Naik Om Parkash was killed while Sepoy Parveen Kumar sustained serious injuries when a grenade went off during cleaning of the weapons. Two other jawans sustained minor injuries. Lance Naik Om Parkash succumbed to his injuries in the hospital. Three other injured jawans have also been hospitalised. Meanwhile, security forces have unearthed two militant hide-outs and recovered ammunition and explosives in Doda and Rajouri districts .

Source : *Daily Excelsior*, 20 October 2005

Grenade blast in Imphal

A hand grenade which was reportedly hurled by suspected KRA cadres exploded near the residence of state tourism commissioner, C Kipgen at Duelahland under Porompat police station this evening at around 6.15 pm. None of the family member or anyone nearby however sustained injuries. Mention may be made that some time back the KRA had served a notice to C Kipgen to surrender to them along with some other people, which the commissioner failed to respond to.

Source : *Imphal Free Press*, October 18, 2005

IED blast in Manipur

The Army has claimed that one civilian namely Ginkhopao Gangte, 35, of Khanpi village under Henglep subdivision of Churachandpur district, Manipur has been killed after he inadvertently stepped on an IED booby trap planted by UGs, according to a statement issued by the PIB defence wing.

Source : *Imphal Free Press*, October 16, 2005

Powerful blast in Hyderabad : home guard, another person killed

A powerful blast ripped through the city Police Commissioner's Task Force office on the bustling Greenlands main road killing a home guard and another unidentified person on Wednesday night. A constable on sentry duty was injured in the mysterious explosion that occurred at a stone's throw away from Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy's official residence. The police suspect that the civilian victim could have brought the explosive to the office of the Task Force, which investigates complicated criminal cases reported in the twin cities. Though the theory of suicide bombing is doing rounds, no police official has confirmed this angle. The blowing of the trunk of the civilian leaving only his head intact led to speculation about the suicide bombing. Going by the blast impact, explosives' experts suspect that it was high explosive, possibly gelatine.

Source : *The Hindu*, 13 October 2005

Explosion: suicide bomber theory gains strength

A day after the mysterious explosion in Commissioner's Task Force office here, the suicide bomber theory suspecting involvement of some religious fundamentalist organisations gained strength on Thursday. While efforts are on to establish identity of the bomber, whose severed head and limbs were found inside task force Additional DCP's chamber, a tattered piece of paper with the handwritten words 'Intekham' (revenge) 'Jihad' (holy war) and '70-year-old' on it was collected from the blast site. Explosive experts opined that gelatine packed in a box with electric detonator was used in the blast. The pieces of wires and batteries collected from the scene substantiated this. Home Minister K. Jana Reddy, who visited the spot, said: "The religious fundamentalist and violent forces behind the explosion will be tracked down and punished."

Source : *The Hindu*, 14 October 2005

13 security personnel killed in Jharkhand blast

At least 13 security personnel, belonging to state police and central paramilitary forces, were killed and 10 others injured in a blast triggered by Maoist guerrillas in Chatra district of Jharkhand on Saturday morning. The bomb, which was kept in a container, went off when security personnel tried to open it. The Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist) is the prime suspect behind the act. Nearly 25 security men were on long-range patrolling in five vehicles when the incident occurred.

Source : *The Hindustan Times*, 9 October 2005

Serial IED Blasts in Kashmir

On day one of the holy month of Ramazan, militants today blew up a vehicle of the State Bank of India killing an official and leaving his Police guards wounded in Anantnag district. Three more civilians, including a class 12th student, have been killed in south Kashmir too. Meanwhile, a part of Safakadal Police Station was destroyed in the capital city interior when a series of blasts occurred and four personnel sustained injuries. Informed sources told the Excelsior that militants in ambush blew up a vehicle of the State Bank of India (SBI) in an IED blast at Kreeri-Naupora on Anantnag-Dooru road at 1215 hours today. Assistant cashier Mohammad Yaseen Dar S/o Mohammad Amin Dar R/o Kursoo Rajbagh, Srinagar, died on spot. His Police guards, Farooq Iqbal of Kupwara and Farooq Ahmed (both from District Police Budgam), sustained critical injuries.

Source : *Daily Excelsior*, 7 October 2005

U.P. alert after fresh Al Qaeda threat to blow Railway Station with RDX

The Uttar Pradesh Government has sounded a red alert at all major railway stations following fresh threats by international terrorist organisation Al Qaeda to blow up Charbagh railway station by RDX. State police along with Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) have cordoned off the Charbagh station, while bomb detection and bomb disposal squads have been deployed to detect the explosives. "The letters claimed that 30 kilograms of RDX is being sent to blow up the station," Mr Anand said. Claiming to be Al Qaeda area commander, Ahmed in the letter threatened that "this week other railway offices would be blown up with RDX."

Source : *The Hindu*, 1 October 2005

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