

Rice fails to damp Indian-Pakistan tensions which rise amid fresh terror threat

Contributed by Debkafile
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DEBKAFfile's military sources report that in their talks in New Delhi and Islamabad Wednesday, Dec. 3, US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice and top US soldier, Adm. Mike Mullen, failed to tamp down the rising military tensions between India and Pakistan. Their talks were clouded by the threat of a second round of terror, this one directed against three Indian international airports, Delhi Bangalore and Chennai, by infiltrators of Pakistani or Afghan origin. Last week, Lashkar e-Taiba Islamists held Mumbai to siege for three days and killed more than 170 people. The Indian investigation points to two Lashkar leaders, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi and Yusuf Muzammil, as masterminds of that outrage.

The intelligence of a second round of attacks which may include the hijacking of aircraft at the three targeted airports, was handed to prime minister Manmohan Singh Wednesday, Dec. 3, by the Indian spy agency RAW. Special forces backed by armored vehicles and explosives detecting devices including sniffer dogs were posted at those airports.

According to our counter-terror sources, Indian intelligence has been warned of a third round of attacks scheduled for the coming festival season against resorts like Goa and Puna which are frequented by foreign tourists and trekkers. Once again, Americans, Britons and Israelis will be singled out.

When Condoleezza Rice urged Indian officials to exercise military restraint against Pakistan they showed her this intelligence. Since Islamabad did not rein in the terrorists who cross the border at will, India had no choice, they said, but to send its army across to hit them in their Pakistani lairs.

Rice then traveled to Islamabad for a last-ditch appeal for urgent Pakistani "cooperation" by rounding up the suspects behind the Mumbai atrocity. But the new president Asif Zardari lacks the clout to deliver.

Security measures have also been tightened across India for the Dec. 6 anniversary of the destruction of the medieval Ayodhya mosque in 1992.

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