

China warns US against meddling in Taiwan issue

Expressing concern over a planned visit by a former American official to Taiwan for talks with the new government on the island, China on Monday asked the US to be cautious on the Taiwan issue and not meddle in China's internal affairs.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said at a press briefing that China has already expressed concern over the planned Taiwan visit by US former Deputy Secretary of State William Burns, who is to meet with senior officials of Taiwan.

Hong reiterated that Taiwan is an inseparable part of Chinese territory and Taiwan affairs are China's internal affairs.

Tsai Ing-wen, leader of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) won the elections in Taiwan on Saturday, becoming the first woman president of Taiwan.

She was strong critic of pro-China Kuomintang (KMT) or Nationalist Party which lost the polls. Hong asked the US to firmly abide by the one-China policy and the principles in the three Sino-US joint communiques, and live up to its commitment to opposing "Taiwan independence".

"We urge the US side to do more things that are conducive to the stable development of China-US relations and peaceful development of relations across the Taiwan Strait, not vice versa," Hong said.

Both China and Taiwan split in 1949 after the civil war. But Taiwan has never declared independence and China still consider it as part of its territory awaiting reunification.

Meanwhile, China's state-run Global Times today warned Tsai against pursuing a pro-independence path saying that formal split from the mainland would be a "dead end".

Zhou Zhihuai, head of the Institute of Taiwan Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, wrote in the daily that if Tsai "parts ways with the mainland, she will go down a dead end.

An editorial in English-language China Daily newspaper said that the Kuomintang lost the election due to issues such as rising unemployment and inequality, rather than its Beijing-friendly approach.

Tsai's policy towards the mainland "remains ambiguous". "She has a responsibility to keep the peaceful development of cross-Straits relations on track," it said.

Republican debate: Trump challenges Cruz over Canada birth

Republican frontrunner Donald Trump has attacked Ted Cruz over his birth in Canada, saying it raises questions about his presidential eligibility.

In the latest Republican debate for White House hopefuls, Mr Trump told his rival: "There's a big question mark over your head."

The constitution mandates the president be a "natural born citizen" of the US.

Issues of national security, the economy and foreign policy have also played heavily in the

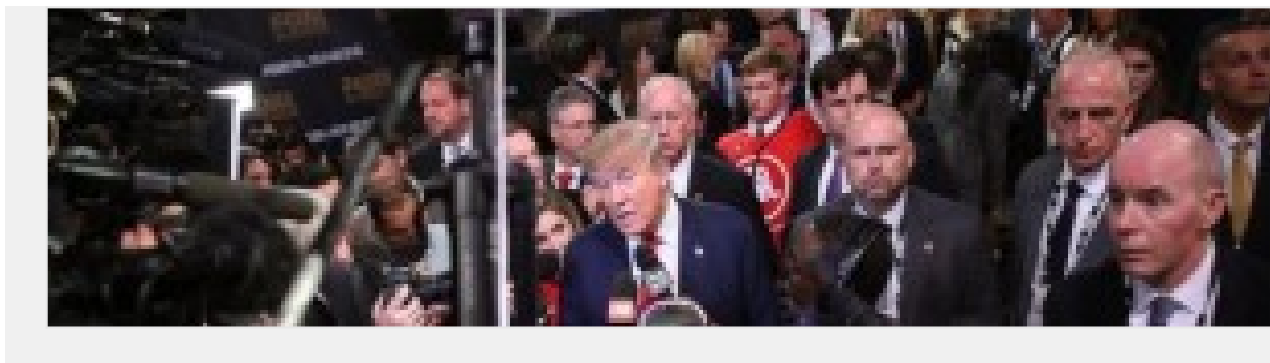
debate.

In the polls, the pair are leading the five other candidates, who were also on the stage in North Charleston.

The debate came just two weeks before the first real test of the campaign, when voters in Iowa pick their Republican and Democratic choices for president.

US media verdict on the debate

“Cruz acquitted himself well, cementing his status as the front-runner’s chief opponent,” writes Howard Kurtz for [Fox News](#).



“But Trump didn’t suffer, and in fact may have had his strongest debate performance... The two-man top tier remains just that, way ahead of the rest of the field.”

“For much of his career in Washington, Ted Cruz has been dismissed as a cartoonish sideshow,” Michael Barbaro notes in [the New York Times](#). However, he “did not just dominate much of the Republican debate, he slashed, he mocked, he charmed and he outmanoeuvred everybody else on stage”.

“Donald Trump and Ted Cruz had an unofficial non-aggression pact at the first five Republican presidential debates... but the sixth one Thursday night quickly became a flurry of mutual scorn,” writes Susan Page in [USA Today](#).

“There were only three real players in this exercise: Trump, Cruz and Rubio,” according to Josh Marshall on the [Talking Points Memo](#) website. “Trump wins, Cruz loses a bit of ground but not much and the clock continues to run out on Rubio.”

Highlights

- Mr Cruz defended a controversy over his campaign finances in 2012, alleging bias in the media
 - He said Mr Trump embodied “New York values”, adding “not a lot of conservatives come out of Manhattan – I’m just saying”
 - Mr Trump defended his call for a halt on Syrian refugees, saying they were a “Trojan horse” bringing in people who would harm the US
 - He came under fire from Florida Governor Jeb Bush for proposing a ban on Muslims coming to the US
 - Florida Senator Marco Rubio said Mr Obama would confiscate every gun in the US if he could
 - The candidates bickered over how to respond to China’s impact on the US economy
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Analysis – Anthony Zurcher, BBC News, Washington

The sixth Republican presidential debate was the political equivalent of a wrestling “battle royale”, where fists fly, chairs are thrown, the crowd cheers and the referees flee for safety.

There could have been no clearer indication that the Cruz-Trump honeymoon was over. The two candidates who stand atop the Republican presidential opinion polls had exchanged warm words through much of the campaign but with the Iowa caucuses just two weeks away, the niceties have melted away.

They exchanged barbs over Mr Cruz’s Canadian birthplace and Mr Trump’s alleged liberal “New York values”.

From there, numerous side fights broke out. Rubio v Christie over Mr Christie’s tenure as New Jersey governor. Trump v Kasich, Rubio v Bush on trade. Rubio v Cruz on immigration. Each candidate could boast a strong moment or two, but each also felt the sting of their competitors’ barbs.

A battle royale is supposed to end when only one participant is left standing. In Charleston, however, all the candidates survived – but all were bloodied.

The event hosted by Fox Business Network came after days of Mr Cruz and Mr Trump taking shots at each other, shattering a months-long period of goodwill between the two men.

The start of hostilities began a week ago when the billionaire businessman started raising questions about whether the Texas senator’s birth in Canada put his eligibility in doubt.

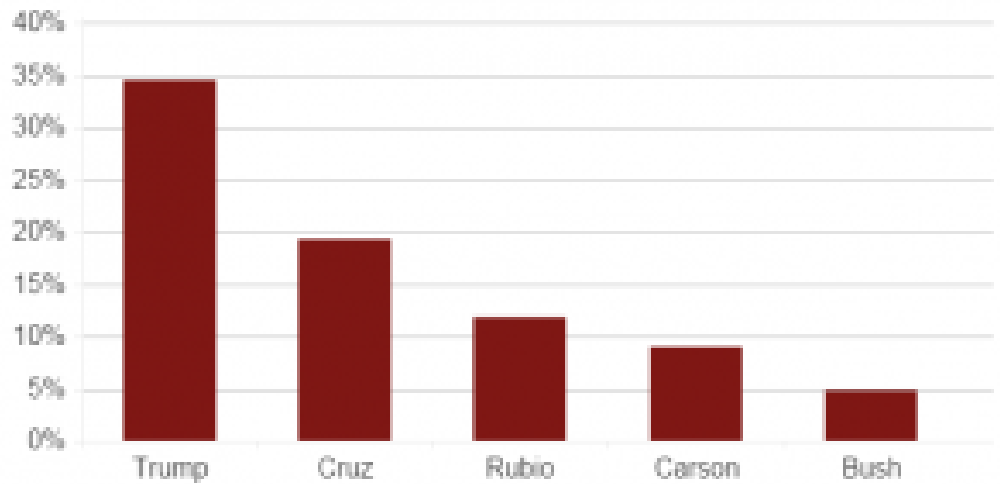
But on the debate stage on Thursday night, Mr Cruz said there was “zero chance” of a lawsuit succeeding because the constitution’s definition of “natural born citizens” included people born to an American parent.

Mr Cruz was born in Calgary to an American mother and a Cuban father.

But the business mogul stood firm, noting that a Harvard law scholar had raised doubts and Mr Cruz could face lawsuits by Democrats wishing to challenge his qualification.

Race for Republican nomination

Backing for nominees



Based on average of polls carried out for: NBC News/Wall Street Journal; CBS/New York Times; IBC/TIPP; Fox News. Fieldwork occurred between 4-13 January with sampling errors in the range ±3-6%.



Candidates for US president must

- be a “natural born citizen” – this has never been tested in court but is widely interpreted as being a US citizen at birth, so born in the US or having a US citizen parent
- be 35 years of age or older
- have lived in the US for the past 14 years

[Could a Canadian be US president?](#)

They also argued over the meaning of “New York values”, which Mr Cruz threw at the New York billionaire as a slur on his conservative credentials.

But the New Yorker said that was an insult to the “great people” who pulled together after the 9/11 attacks.

After the debate, Mr Trump told reporters: “I guess the bromance is over.”

All the candidates targeted leading Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton, who was repeatedly attacked for her time as Secretary of State.

The primary contests, in which each party picks their nominee for president, begin in February and the presidential election is in November.

One in coma after French clinical trial

Six people are in a critical condition – including one in a coma – after clinical trial of new drug in France, the country’s health minister says.



Health Minister Marisol Touraine is travelling to Rennes. Photo: AFP/BBC

Marisol Touraine said there had been a “very serious accident” during a trial by a private laboratory in Rennes.

The minister said she would be making an emergency visit to the city, in the north-west of France, on Friday.

The trial has been suspended and the firm is recalling the volunteers. It is unclear how many people are involved.

Participants had taken “a drug taken orally being developed by a European laboratory” that was licensed to operate, the ministry said in a statement (in French).

Unconfirmed French media reports said it was a cannabis-based painkiller.

The first people to fall ill were taken into hospital earlier this week, French media said. An

investigation is under way.

Touraine expressed her “deep determination to get to the bottom... of this tragic accident” and find who was responsible.

Jakarta attacks: Convicted militant named as attacker

Police in Indonesia have identified four out of five of the Jakarta attackers. Two were previously convicted militants.

Police named one – Afif Sunakim, seen carrying a gun and rucksack during the attacks. He was given a seven-year jail term for attending a militant camp.

All five died in Thursday’s attacks, which left two civilians dead and were claimed by Islamic State (IS).

Three arrests were made on Friday but it is unclear if they are connected.

Security forces battled militants for hours in the busy commercial district where the militants struck.

A Canadian and an Indonesian national died, and at least 20 people were injured.

The assault ended when two attackers died in a suicide bombing, police say, with the other three killed in gun battles.

Following recent IS threats, the country, which had been attacked by Islamist militants several times in the past, had been on high alert.

- [Who is the gunman in the picture?](#)
- [What we know about the attack](#)
- [‘We are not afraid’ tweets Jakarta](#)
- [A new breed of militants](#)
- [IS influence in Indonesia](#)

Gen Badrodin Haiti, the national police chief, said Sunakim and one other attacker had both been convicted criminals.

Jakarta’s chief of police, Insp Gen Tito Karnavian, said a hunt was under way for terror cells believed to be behind the attack.

Three men were arrested near Jakarta early on Friday, police told local media.

A police spokesman, Anton Charliyan, confirmed on Friday that those who organised the attacks were associated with IS.

Two of the perpetrators, he added, were “known to have committed similar radical activities some time ago”.

Earlier, Bahrum Naim, an Indonesian believed to be fighting with IS in Syria, was named as the suspected co-ordinator.

Insp Gen Karnavian said Naim's "vision" was to unite various IS-supporting groups across South East Asia.

IS released a statement saying it had targeted citizens of countries which are part of the international coalition fighting the group, which controls parts of Syria and Iraq.

'Game-changer' for Indonesia

Life is getting back to normal on the junction where the attack happened – but only up to a point.

Traffic is flowing and the road sweepers are busy but the police post which was hit remains boarded up, and the Starbucks cafe at the centre of the attack is surrounded by iron fencing, curious onlookers and media using anything at hand to peer over the top at the blown out windows.

The condolence flowers have now been removed – probably to stop the crowds gathering to take selfies, risking their lives in the morning traffic.

But with the city's police chief admitting Thursday's assault is likely to be a game-changer for Indonesia, there is no doubt the risk of another attack has taken a new form. And no matter how "tiny" the group, as he called them, they have proved they can kill.

Insp Gen Karnavian told the BBC the main culprits were "connected to other cells in Java and Sulawesi and we are chasing them".

He said one IS plot had been foiled at the end of 2015 and a number of people detained, among them a man who said he had been instructed by Naim.

Naim has been linked to the IS-allied East Indonesia Mujahidin Group (MIT), which is based on the island of Sulawesi.

Insp Gen Karnavian said Indonesia had significantly developed its understanding of domestic militant networks since the 2002 bomb attack in Bali, which killed 202 people.

Some 1,000 people linked to radical networks had been brought to justice in Indonesia since 2000, he said, but some had since been released from prison and had "the potential to pose a threat".

"What we need to do today is strengthen capability and also sharing information with others because it is not home grown in Indonesia but it is part of a global network," he said.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo tweeted on Friday that there was "no place for terrorism on Earth" and that "every citizen in the world" needed to fight it.

Islamist attacks in Indonesia

Indonesia has suffered militant attacks in the past, but has been relatively successful in curbing home-grown Islamist extremism after a spate of attacks in the last decade. Some of the deadliest include

- July 2009: Seven people killed and dozens wounded when two suicide bombers target Marriott and Ritz Carlton hotels in Jakarta
- Oct 2005: Suicide attacks in Bali leave 23 dead, including the bombers
- Sept 2004: Bomb outside Australian embassy in Jakarta kills at least nine people
- Aug 2003: Bomb at Jakarta's Marriott Hotel kills 12
- Oct 2002: Bali bombings kill 202, including 88 Australians
- Dec 2000: Church bombings across the country kill 19

Netflix cracks down on proxy streaming

Video-streaming giant Netflix has said it is going to stop subscribers from using internet proxies to view content not available in their home countries.

Due to licensing agreements, Netflix content varies between countries – many users have a virtual private network (VPN) or other proxy to get round this.

The firm said it would increase efforts in the next few weeks to block the use of such proxies.

Netflix expanded streaming services to more than 130 countries last week.

But some countries have more content than others – for example, the Australian Netflix catalogue has only about 10% of the content available to its US subscribers.

David Fullagar, vice president of content delivery architecture, said in a blog post on Thursday that the US firm was in the process of licensing content around the world.

But he said it had a long way to go before it could offer viewers the same films and shows everywhere.

“If all of our content were globally available, there wouldn't be a reason for members to use proxies or ‘unblockers’ to fool our systems into thinking they're in a different country than they're actually in,” he said.

“In the meantime, we will continue to respect and enforce content licensing by geographic location.”

Subscribers that currently use proxies to view content outside their countries will only be able to access the service in their own countries in the coming week, the company said.

Those members that do not use VPNs will not be impacted by the crackdown, it added.

The move is a reversal of Netflix's denial last week after reports had surfaced that they would be restricting VPN access to their content.

Next raid on Sisodia, Satyendra Jain; Modi can't do anything as God is with us: Kejriwal

In yet another scathing attack against the Centre, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday made sensational allegations against the BJP disposition and alleged that his deputy Manish Sisodia or Delhi cabinet minister Satyendra Jain could be the next 'target' of Narendra Modi regime.

Kejriwal said that the PMO officials were being pressurised to dig out something 'wrong' signed by Sisodia and Jain to trap them.

Kejriwal also tweeted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi can't harm him and Delhi ministers as 'God is with them'.

The Delhi CM has been at loggerheads with Centre since coming to power in February last year.

Last month, Kejriwal had accused Union Minister Arun Jaitley and the central government of raiding his office to get control of certain files pertaining to the DDCA scam, where the union Finance Minister's role is being questioned.

Zimbabwe strike early

Zimbabwe were gifted a wicket when disastrous running between the wickets by Bangladeshi openers saw the back of Soumya Sarkar.

Tamim didn't respond to Soumya's call, and both the batters ended up on one side of the wicket. Soumya scored seven runs before he was run out.

BANGLADESH VS ZIMBABWE 1ST T20I

Bangladesh: 41/1 (5/20 over)

Zimbabwe: 163/7 (20.0/20 over)

Earlier, Bangladesh managed to restrict Zimbabwe down to 163 at the end of 20 overs with wickets at regular intervals.

Mustafizur, Al-Amin and Shakib Al Hasan struck during the death overs, and were ably supported by the fielders to inflict two run-outs in the Zimbabwean camp.

Mustafizur and Al-Amin took two wickets each while Shakib picked one. For Zimbabwe it was the Hamilton Masakadza show all through!

He and Sibanda laid the foundation for the challenging total with their first wicket stand.

Mustafizur struck twice in the 19th over to hurt Zimbabwe's chances of a big total. The left arm sensation clean bowled Elton Chigumbura and Luke Jongwe of consecutive deliveries, and

conceded only two runs in the over.

Bangladeshi pacer finished his quota of four overs, took two wickets and gave away only 18 runs.

The 18th over brought the downfall of Hamilton Masakadza, who had dominated proceedings from the start. Nurul Hasan found the Zimbabwean batter short with an accurate over-arm throw.

Masakadza hammered 79 from 53 balls. His brutal knock included nine fours and two sixes as well. He gave Zimbabwe the impetus for a big total today, and looked comfortable as long as he stayed at the crease.

Zimbabwe lost their second wicket in the 15th over due to an unnecessary run-out against the run of play.

With erroneous calling, a horrible mix-up resulted when the batters went for the second run, and saw Waller short of the crease by miles. The batsman scored 14 from 8 balls.

Shakib Al Hasan gave Bangladesh their first breakthrough when he sent back Sibanda for a well-made 46 from 39 balls.

Sibanda and Masakadza got stuck into the Bangladeshi bowlers, and smashed a century partnership in real quick time. Their opening stand lasted 12 overs and produced 101 runs.

Hamilton Masakadza was going strong at the crease, and had reached his fifty off 33 balls. He was unbeaten on 58 from 37 balls with eight fours and a huge six after 12 overs into this match.

Masakadza and Sibanda gave Zimbabwe a blistering start, with boundaries flowing from both the openers' bat.

Zimbabwe batters racked up forty runs after only five overs on the board, and looked to take the attack to the Bangladeshi bowlers and unsettle them.

Zimbabwe captain Elton Chigumbura won the toss, and decided to bat first and put up a good total on the board in the first T20I of the series against Bangladesh at Khulna.

Zimbabwe have a 16-man squad to choose from, which includes the return of Vusi Sibanda, Sean Williams and Brian Vitori, who in 2011 troubled Bangladesh at home, picking up a matchwinning first-innings four-for in the only Test and topping the wicket charts in the ODI series.

The visitors will want to bounce back after their recent series losses, in both ODIs and T20s, to Afghanistan in the UAE. Coach Dav



Bangladeshi ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan takes a wicket.

Whatmore said it was a closer contest than the result suggested but Zimbabwe would still be concerned by their current form.

Experimentation is the buzzword around the second Bangladesh-Zimbabwe T20 series in the 2015-16 season.

Both teams are looking ahead to the World T20 in March, and with the least exposure in this format among all Test-playing nations, it is hardly a surprise that they are trying to cram in as many T20s as possible before the major event.

Shakib Al Hasan and Soumya Sarkar are back in their squad, with three newcomers also given a chance to show their worth in the first two T20s. Bangladesh have handed debuts to Shuvagata Hom and Nurul Hasan. Imrul Kayes, Abu Hider and Arafat Sunny have been left out.

Teams

Bangladesh: 1 Tamim Iqbal, 2 Soumya Sarkar, 3 Mahmudullah, 4 Mushfiqur Rahim, 5 Shakib Al Hasan, 6 Sabbir Rahman, 7 Shuvagata Hom, 8 Nurul Hasan (Wicketkeeper), 9 Mashrafe Mortaza (Captain), 10 Mustafizur Rahman, 11 Al-Amin Hossain

Zimbabwe: 1 Vusi Sibanda, 2 Hamilton Masakadza, 3 Peter Moor (Wicketkeeper), 4 Sean Williams, 5 Malcolm Waller, 6 Sikandar Raza, 7 Elton Chigumbura (Captain), 8 Luke Jongwe, 9 Graeme Cremer, 10 Wellington Masakadza, 11 Brian Vitori

Suicide bomb attack, gunbattle near Indian Consulate in Afghanistan kills seven security personnel

A suicide bomb attack and subsequent gunfire outside the Pakistani Consulate in Jalalabad killed at least seven Afghan security personnel on Wednesday.

The attack took place not far away from the Indian Consulate located in an area which houses foreign missions.

The suicide bomber blew himself up outside the Pakistani consulate and the bombing was followed by gunfire from unidentified terrorists.

Afghan security forces swiftly responded to the attack and engaged with the gunmen barricaded in a house near the Pakistan Consulate.

The gunbattle continued for nearly four hours.

“Seven of our security forces were killed and seven others wounded as a result of the terrorist attack,” Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said on Twitter.

It was not clear how many terrorists had been killed.

Witnesses earlier said heavy gunfire and a series of explosions could be heard and residents and children from a nearby school had been evacuated.

Attaullah Khogyani, a spokesman for the provincial governor, had earlier said a suicide bomber tried to join a queue of people seeking visas to Pakistan and blew himself up after being prevented from entering the building.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack so far.

Indian interests have been targeted twice this month – an attack on the Indian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif (Afghanistan), and a raid by Islamist insurgents on an Air Force base in Punjab.

A small bomb also exploded near the Indian consulate in Jalalabad last Tuesday, but no casualties were reported.

(With agency inputs)

Pakistan shuts down seminaries run by Jaish-e-Mohammad

Lahore: Pakistani authorities have shut down several religious schools run by the Jaish-e-Mohammad militant group accused of masterminding an attack this month on an air base in India, the provincial law minister said on Friday.

The crackdown in Punjab province, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s power base and the headquarters of Jaish-e-Mohammad, follows the arrest this week of several members of the militant group, including its leader, Maulana Masood Azhar, an Islamist hardliner and long-time foe of India.

Pakistan has said it is clamping down on Azhar’s group, which India has long accused Pakistani authorities of tolerating, while it investigates Indian assertions that the January 2 attack on the Pathankot air base was the work of the Pakistan-based militants.

“Officials of the Counter-Terrorism Department raided the Jamiatul Nur seminary in the Daska area on Thursday and arrested more than a dozen people,” Rana Sanaullah, the law minister of the Punjab province where Jaish-e-Mohammad is headquartered, told Reuters.

“The seminary has been sealed off and documents and literature have been confiscated from the premises.”

1971 war hero Jacob laid to eternal rest

Lt Gen J F R Jacob (retd), who negotiated the surrender of Pakistani troops in Dhaka following the 1971 war, was laid to rest in Delhi on Thursday.

Jacob died at the age of 92 due to "old age complications". Jacob, who was also Governor of Punjab and Goa, breathed his last at the Army Hospital yesterday at around 8am. He was admitted to the Army's Research and Referral Hospital since January 1 after suffering from pneumonia. Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled his demise and said India will always remain grateful to Jacob for his impeccable service to the nation. He also recalled his association with him, reports UNB.

Jacob had negotiated the surrender of Pakistani troops in Dhaka after the 1971 Bangladesh liberation war when, as Major General, he served as the Chief of Staff of Indian Army's Eastern Command.

Born in 1923 in Bengal Presidency under British India, Jacob joined the army at the age of 19 in 1942 and also fought in World War II and the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 before he retired in 1978.

Post retirement, he joined BJP and headed its ex-servicemen wing. He was appointed Governor of Goa during Vajpayee government and then Governor of Punjab.

He was also the Administrator of Union Territory of Chandigarh. During his stint as Punjab Governor and UT Administrator, he would often conduct check in government offices unannounced.

He authored two books – 'Surrender at Dacca: Birth of a Nation' and 'An Odyssey in War and Peace: An Autobiography Lt Gen J F R Jacob'.
