**2001: Suicide attack on Indian parliament**

A group of gunmen has broken through tight security to attack the parliament building in the Indian capital, New Delhi.

At least 12 people have been killed and 22 injured in the attack.

There were about 100 members of parliament in the building at the time, although none is believed to have been hurt.

The gunmen are thought to have used a fake identity sticker to get through tight security surrounding the parliament complex.

Wearing military-style fatigues, they burst into the area in front of the parliament just before noon local time (0630 GMT).

Witnesses said one was wearing explosives strapped to his body and blew himself up soon after the men broke in.

**Gun battle**

A gun battle began between the attackers and police, in a dramatic hour-long standoff broadcast live on television.

Indian government officials said the remaining four gunmen were killed in the fighting, along with six police officers and a gardener.

Parliamentarian Kharbala Sain was in the building when the attack began.

"I heard a cracker-like sound near the entrance, then I saw people running helter-skelter," he said.

"I saw many people firing at the same time. I couldn't make out who was who. I couldn't understand who the terrorists were and who the police were. My mind went blank."

**'Warning' to nation**

The Indian Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, made a televised address to the nation shortly after the attacks, and was quick to denounce the militants.

"This was not just an attack on the building, it was a warning to the entire nation," he said. "We accept the challenge."

No group has admitted carrying out the attack, which comes just two months after a similar assault on the Kashmir state assembly in Srinagar, in which 38 people died.

Many have suggested that Kashmiri militants may also be behind today's attack.

Some politicians have called for action against Pakistan, suspected in some quarters of arming and training the militants.

The two countries have fought two wars over the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir since independence in 1947, and came to the brink of a third war in 1999.

But Pakistan has condemned the attack and denied any involvement. It says it will act on any credible proof of the involvement of militant groups based on their soil.

In Context

Three men, suspected Kashmiri militants Mohammed Afzal and Shaukat Hussain Guru, and college professor SAR Geelani, were convicted and sentenced to death in December 2002 for supporting and helping to plan the attack on parliament.

The High Court later overturned the conviction against Mr Geelani, who had spent two years in prison, and also freed Navjot Sandhu, Hussain's wife, sentenced to five years in prison for withholding information from police. The acquittals have been challenged by Delhi police.

In early 2004, the Supreme Court delayed the execution of the two remaining men pending appeals.

The five were the first to be sentenced under India's new draconian anti-terrorist laws, which were being debated at the time of the attack.

Relations between India and Pakistan deteriorated badly after the attack. A massive build-up of troops along their common border during 2002 led to international concern about a possible war.

Relations have since thawed again, however, and in January 2004 the two sides renewed their peace talks over Kashmir.