

NAPSNET Week in Review 1 November, 2002

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United States

1. Powell on 'Global Unity' on DPRK Nuclear Issue

The US State Department Information Services carried a transcript of US Secretary of State Colin Powell on the DPRK Nuclear Issue which read: Secretary of State Colin Powell says he believes there is global agreement on the need to exert pressure on the DPRK for violating its 1994 Agreed Framework with the US, under which the DPRK government agreed to forego nuclear weapons development. "The entire international community, I think, is unified in applying pressure on North Korea to dismantle this program," Powell told reporters October 26. At the same time, Powell said the US and its allies are determined to find a timely solution to the problem. "There is one thing that is absolutely clear," he said of the DPRK. "They violated agreements they had entered into. And so that violation has to be dealt with."

The full transcript can be found here:

"Powell on 'Global Unity' on DPRK Nuclear Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

2. US Domestic Politics

Five members of Congress yesterday urged President Bush to scrap the 1994 nuclear agreement with the DPRK because of the DPRK's recent admission that it had a covert nuclear arms program. "First and foremost, it seems that since North Korea's covert nuclear program is a blatant violation of the Agreed Framework, the accord is nullified," the lawmakers said in a letter sent to the White House. "In that regard, we strongly believe that the US should cease support for the Korean Energy Development Organization [KEDO], and that US fuel-oil shipments should be permanently terminated." The letter was signed by Senators Jon Kyl, Arizona Republican; Jesse Helms, North Carolina Republican; and Robert C. Smith, New Hampshire Republican. In the House, Reps. Christopher Cox, California Republican, and Edward J. Markey, Massachusetts Democrat.

"US Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

3. US-Japan-ROK Talks on DPRK Nuclear Issue

A senior Pentagon official will visit Japan and the ROK next week to discuss the DPRK's nuclear weapons program and other issues in the region, US defense officials said on Thursday. The officials told Reuters that Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith would depart Washington on Sunday or on Monday. Feith will talk with top officials in Tokyo and Seoul about rising tensions on the Korean peninsula. US officials did not discuss details, but one said Feith was also likely to exchange views on US plans to hold Defense Consultative Talks with the PRC in Beijing later this year or early next year.

"US-Japan-ROK Talks on DPRK Nuclear Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

4. US Missile Defense

The US Defense Department needs more anti-missile rockets as it prepares for possible military action against Iraq, the head of the Missile Defense Agency said Thursday. Lt. Gen. Ronald Kadish said that the US has only about 40 of its most advanced Patriot missiles to defend against short-range ballistic and cruise missiles. Experts suspect Iraq alone has several times that many Scud and other short-range missiles, which could be topped with chemical or biological warheads. Kadish said he would like to have many more of the advanced Patriots to counter threats from the DPRK, Iran and Libya as well as Iraq. The main contractors on the latest Patriot, known as Patriot Advanced Capability 3, can make two of the rockets per month, Kadish said. The Pentagon hopes to speed up that process, but doing so will take time, he said. "My recommendation is to buy PAC-3s as fast as we are able to buy them," Kadish told reporters. Outside experts estimate each rocket costs about US\$170 million.

"US Missile Defense" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

Korean Peninsula

1. DPRK Nuclear Issue

The DPRK halted its recent moves toward conciliatory diplomacy at talks this week with Japan. In two days of talks, the DPRK refused to dismantle its nuclear program without direct negotiations with the US and balked at reuniting with their parents the children of five released kidnap victims who are in Japan on a "visit." The DPRK has instead demanded talks on the nuclear issue solely with the US. The Bush administration has said it will not negotiate with the DPRK. Japanese negotiators acknowledged disappointment in the deadlock at the end of the talks tonight. "Although we made utmost efforts, to our regret, we failed to secure a change in their position," Japan's chief negotiator, Katsunari Suzuki, told reporters. US high-ranking authorities reportedly called on the DPRK to scrap its nuclear weapons program, asserting that the US would not resume talks with the DPRK and calling for putting international pressure upon it under the pretext of its nuclear issue.

"DPRK Nuclear Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

"Japan on DPRK Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

"DPRK Nuclear Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, US)

"DPRK on DPRK Nuclear Weapons" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

"DPRK on Nuclear Weapons" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

"US, Japan and ROK's Attitude towards DPRK Nuclear Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, PRC)

2. DPRK on Non-Aggression Treaty

The Korean Central News Agency carried an official item that reported that how the US approaches the proposal to conclude a non-aggression treaty between the DPRK and the US is a touchstone showing whether the US has a true will to solve the nuclear issue and whether it intends to settle it through dialogue and negotiations with the DPRK or by a war. It goes on: The public at home and abroad has warmly hailed and supported the important proposal advanced by the DPRK to conclude a Non-Aggression Treaty between the two countries in a bid to bridge over the grave situation prevailing in the Korean Peninsula owing to the U.S. unilateral and high-handed attitude. The key to straightening out the grave situation lies in concluding a non-aggression treaty between the DPRK and the US as proposed by the former.

"DPRK on Non-Aggression Treaty" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, US)

3. ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue

The ROK said on Thursday it was confident there would be a diplomatic solution to the problem of the DPRK's nuclear weapons, but acknowledged that it was still early days in the impasse with the DPRK. ROK President Kim Dae-jung's chief spokeswoman reiterated Kim's demand a day earlier that the DPRK take "verifiable action" to defuse a crisis raised by its recently unveiled covert nuclear arms program. The ROK would proceed with diplomacy with the unanimous backing Kim had won at an Asia-Pacific summit last weekend in Mexico, spokeswoman Park Sun-sook told reporters. "There is an agreement on the route to resolving the North Korean nuclear problem," Park said. "There is a long road ahead of us. Verifiable action by North Korea is necessary," she added.

"ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

"ROK on DPRK Nuclear Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, US)

"DPRK-ROK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, PRC)

4. US Response to DPRK

The US government should balance its response to DPRK with its policy toward Iraq, according to a report released by a US Congressional research arm on Monday. The Congressional Research Service updated its report on DPRK's nuclear weapons program on October 21, after the Bush administration's disclosure on October 16 that DPRK had admitted to having a secret nuclear program. The report, written by researcher Larry Nicksch, suggested that US decide whether to negotiate with DPRK, "seeking a new agreement dealing with the secret program," or to handle the issue under the 1992 bilateral agreement between DPRK and the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Bush administration was also advised to decide whether to stick with the 1994 accord, which the DPRK and US officials called "nullified" after the revelation, or suspend or terminate it. In a press briefing in Washington, US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said DPRK will not be able to break out of its self-imposed isolation unless it dismantles its secret nuclear program.

"US Response to DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, ROK)

"DPRK-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, PRC)

5. Russia on DPRK Nuclear Issue

In a change of course, Russia on Thursday accused the DPRK of being insufficiently forthcoming about its alleged nuclear weapons program, while the DPRK's ambassador to Moscow defended its right to develop nuclear weapons. US Undersecretary of State John Bolton then traveled to Russia to present Russian officials with evidence of the alleged uranium enrichment program. Russia reacted with caution, saying it would like to independently check the information before making any definite conclusions. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov said that Russia had received an explanation from the DPRK, Interfax reported. But he said it was insufficient. "There is some ambiguity in the statements by North Korean representatives," Losyukov stated.

"Russia on DPRK Nuclear Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

"RF on DPRK Nuclear Weapons" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

6. DPRK-Japan Normalization Talk

The DPRK rejected Japanese demands that it abandon its nuclear-weapons program, saying it would only discuss the issue with the US. The refusal came as officials from Japan and the DPRK met Tuesday in Kuala Lumpur for talks aimed at forging diplomatic relations for the first time. But during the first of two scheduled days of negotiations, the DPRK abandoned its recent cooperative attitude. A Japanese official told reporters in the Malaysian capital that the DPRK rejected Japan's calls for the DPRK to give up nuclear-weapons development, and blamed concerns over its nuclear program on the "anti-North Korean stance of the United States," Japanese news reports said. The DPRK also accused Japan of breaking a promise to return to the DPRK five Japanese citizens who had been abducted by the DPRK.

"Japan-DPRK Abduction Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

"DPRK-Japan Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, US)

"DPRK-Japan Normalization Talk" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, ROK)

"Japan on DPRK Nuclear Weapons" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

"Japan-DPRK Talks" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

"DPRK-Japan Normalization Talk" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)

"Japan-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, PRC) "Japan-DPRK Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

7. DPRK Nuclear Speculation

The US has been warned by the PRC that the DPRK may have between three and five working nuclear weapons, twice the CIA's estimate. Diplomatic sources say the PRC based their figure on intelligence reports and told US officials last week that a confrontation with the DPRK would spell disaster. The PRC appear to have concluded that the DPRK obtained enough uranium from a second clandestine program to make several more devices. Evidence has emerged to suggest the CIA is coming round to this theory. Experts believe the DPRK has succeeded in miniaturizing their weapons to make warheads for their ballistic missiles. The latest generation of DPRK missiles is capable of hitting anywhere in Japan.

"DPRK Nuclear Speculation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

"Nuclear Bombs in DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)

"DPRK Nuclear Speculation" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

8. DPRK Missile Tests

The US intelligence is watching for signs that the DPRK will conduct a flight test of a ballistic missile capable of delivering a nuclear warhead to US soil. The missile, the Taepo Dong 2, is far enough along in development that intelligence agencies believe the DPRK could launch one in a test fairly quickly. For now, US intelligence officials say they have no evidence that the DPRK is preparing for such a test. The US is concerned about evidence which indicates the DPRK is continuing its development of long-range missiles, Lt. Gen. Ronald Kadish, head of the Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency, said Thursday. A deployed weapon, while somewhat further off, would threaten the continental US and probably hasten US efforts to deploy a missile defense system. The DPRK may also sell it to other countries, including Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Libya and Egypt, as they have many of their other long-range missiles. "DPRK Missile Tests" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

9. APEC on DPRK Weapons Program

The 21 nation members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation called on the DPRK to abandon its nuclear-weapons program, but the statement fell short of the sort of "condemnation" Bush administration officials said they were seeking. Despite two days of talks, the US and its Asian allies appeared to make little ground on opening a discussion about what, if any, sanctions should be imposed if the DPRK doesn't abandon its program. As a result, President Bush left the APEC sessions Sunday no closer to achieving a clear framework for confronting the DPRK's surprising admission it is trying to build a nuclear weapon than when he arrived here Friday. After a trilateral meeting on Saturday, President Bush, ROK President Kim Dae Jung and Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi issued a statement calling on the DPRK to "dismantle this program in prompt and verifiable manner," and it said the DPRK's "relations with the international community" hang in the balance. "APEC on DPRK Weapons Program" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)
"APEC Statement on DPRK" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)
"APEC Countries Cooperation against Terrorism" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)

10. ROK on DPRK Economic Sanctions

ROK President Kim Dae-jung fears threatened economic sanctions against the DPRK over the DPRK's nuclear weapons program could trigger a war that would kill millions. Kim is categorically opposed to suggestions among some Republicans in Washington that US President George W. Bush withdraw from a 1994 arms control accord with the DPRK and impose sanctions against them. "If economic sanctions are imposed, then North Korea will say, 'OK, we will go ahead and make our own nuclear weapons,' and that will raise the risk of nuclear war," Kim said in a speech to Korean nationals in Seattle on Monday. Kim said a possible new war would be more devastating than the 1950-53 Korean War. "ROK on DPRK Economic Sanctions" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)
"ROK President's Sunshine Ongoing" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, ROK)

11. DPRK's Urge of Joint Defense

In a statement DPRK Central Radio, Tuesday, the Fatherland Peaceful Unification Committee said both ROK and DPRK had benefited from DPRK's emphasis on military development. It continued that if DPRK had not concentrated on "military first policies," there would have been numerous wars and the ROK people would not have survived. The FPUC said thanks to DPRK's strong self-defensive power, both Koreas were able to exist peacefully in their protective zones. It urged ROK to join in protection of the independence of the peninsula, which it said was seriously threatened by US. .

"DPRK's Urge of Joint Defense" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, ROK)

12. DPRK Food Production

The DPRK raised its cereal production this year but is still desperate for food aid, the United Nations said on Monday. "In spite of an increased harvest, a significant number of families in North Korea are still unable to meet their food needs," two U.N. food agencies said in a special report. "The country will again have to depend on substantial external food assistance," the Rome-based U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation and World Food Programme said. Separately on Monday, the WFP -- the world's largest food aid agency -- said it was struggling to feed 6.5 million people in the DPRK as funding shortages had forced it to suspend some emergency relief operations there.

"DPRK Food Production" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

13. DPRK US Soldier Remains

The Chicago Tribune, "WARTIME REMAINS FOUND IN NORTH SAID TO BE 11 U.S. SOLDIERS," Seoul, 10/27/02) reported that eleven sets of remains believed to be from US soldiers killed in the 1950-53 Korean War have been recovered in the DPRK and will be repatriated this week, the US military said. The remains will be flown Tuesday from Pyongyang to a US base in Japan, the US military command in Seoul said late Saturday in a news release. Joint US and Korean teams recovered the remains near the Chosin Reservoir and nearby Unsan county, about 60 miles north of Pyongyang. The US and DPRK agreed in June to hold three excavation operations this year. The coming repatriation marks the last of this year's operations. [This Chicago Tribune article appeared in in today's edition of the US Department of the Defense's Early Bird news summary.]

"DPRK US Soldier Remains" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

14. DPRK Economic Survey Team

Top DPRK economic officials test-rode a "bullet" train and toured science and industrial facilities Tuesday during a study tour of it's the ROK, officials from the ROK said. The 18-member DPRK economic survey team, headed by the DPRK's top economic planner, has been keeping busy "beyond our expectations" since arriving Saturday, said Kim Soo-hae, an official at the Ministry of Finance and Economy. The DPRK officials have visited information technology plants, a confectionery, an amusement park and shopping malls, and mixed briefly with ordinary South Koreans on a Seoul subway. "They are unusually frank and eager to learn far more than we expected," Kim said. Officials on the DPRK economic team avoided the nuclear issue and other sensitive topics, said ROK officials. The DPRK delegation is headed by Park Nam Gi, chairman of the government committee that oversees economic development, and Chang Sung Taek, a senior official in the communist Worker's Party and brother-in-law of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.

"DPRK Economic Survey Team" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

"Inter-Korean Economic Exchange" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, ROK)

15. DPRK-Canada Relations

The DPRK, which established diplomatic relations with Canada in February 2001, now plans to open an embassy in Ottawa, Canadian officials said on Tuesday. "The (North Koreans) informed us of their intention to establish a mission in Ottawa in August of this year. An administrative advance team has been in Ottawa for some weeks assessing their requirements," said Canadian foreign ministry spokeswoman Kimberly Phillips. Earlier this month Ottawa scrapped what would have been the first visit to the DPRK by a government minister after it emerged that Pyongyang had violated a 1994 deal to control its nuclear program. Canada was the fourth member of the Group of Eight powerful nations after Russia, Italy and Britain to fully recognize the DPRK.

"DPRK-Canada Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

16. DPRK Japan Summit Stamps

The DPRK has begun selling thousands of stamps commemorating DPRK leader Kim Jong Il's September 17 summit with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, said Takeo Shimizu, president of the Japan Philatelic Agency, on Thursday. About 10,000 of the two-stamp sets will go to the Japan Philatelic Agency, a private stamp importer, for sale in Japan, Shimizu said. The company paid the DPRK about US\$20,000 in cash, he said. The sale would provide the DPRK with hard currency it needs for its cash-strapped economy and its impoverished people. The 120-won and 150-won stamps show Koizumi and Kim shaking hands and signing a joint declaration at the first-ever summit between the Japan and the DPRK.

"DPRK Japan Summit Stamps" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 31, US)

People's Republic of China

1. Post-PRC-US Summit

PRC President Jiang Zemin has invited US President George W. Bush to visit the PRC again and Bush has accepted, the foreign ministry in Beijing announced. "I can confirm that President Jiang Zemin has invited President Bush to visit China again and that President Bush has already accepted the invitation with pleasure," spokesman Liu Jianchao told reporters Tuesday. He did not give dates for the planned trip or any other details. The invitation was made during the leaders' meeting Friday at Bush's ranch in Texas, a foreign ministry spokeswoman added separately. US Vice President Dick Cheney is due to visit the PRC as well in early 2003, Bush announced after his talks with the PRC leader.

"Post-PRC-US Summit" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

2. PRC-US Relations

The PRC and the US have agreed to resume military-to-military ties with plans to hold talks at senior level in the near future, Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said on Tuesday. US President George W. Bush and PRC President Jiang Zemin agreed to resume the links, when they met in Texas on Friday, Liu said. "Both sides agreed to resume the communication of their armies and will hold defence consultations at the vice-ministerial level in the near future as well as other exchange projects," Liu announced. "In the meantime, both sides decided to set up a consultation mechanism at the vice-ministerial level on strategic security, multilateral arms control and non-proliferation," he said.

"PRC-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

"PRC-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, PRC)

"PRC Commentary on PRC-US Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, PRC)

3. PRC Domestic Politics

The Wall Street Journal carried an analytical article that stated that PRC President Jiang Zemin intends to stay on as the PRC's leader in all but name, judging by a flurry of appointments installing his close allies in important positions. PRC officials say the party's most-senior decision-making body, the seven-man Politburo Standing Committee, met to hammer out an agreement on high-level personnel arrangements before Jiang left October 22 for a trip to the US and Mexico. With nearly two weeks to go before the November 8 opening of the party congress, more bargaining is possible, even likely, after Jiang's return to China following his North American visit. With the personnel announcements of the past week, Hu's predicament is becoming clear. Positions that have gone in recent days to men associated with Jiang include the heads of party personnel and propaganda, and the party chiefs of Shanghai and Beijing. The last two come with automatic seats on the party's second-most senior decision-making body, the 23-member Politburo. These appointments suggest Jiang's allies will oversee much of the day-to-day business that enforces party rule -- political appointments, policy proposals, memos and directions to the influential state media. When PRC President Jiang Zemin left Beijing for the United States last week, there was one glaring omission in the lineup of leaders who saw him off at the Great Hall of the People. Li Ruihuan, number four in the Communist Party, was not only absent on that occasion -- he also missed the welcoming ceremony when Jiang returned on Tuesday. His only public commitment was a painting exhibition. Li's absence has raised eyebrows and fuels speculation in political and diplomatic circles over a power struggle between him and Jiang.

"PRC Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, US)

"PRC Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, US)

" PRC Domestic Politics" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

4. PRC Yasukuni Shrine Warning

PRC President Jiang Zemin warned Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi never again to visit a shrine in Tokyo that honors fallen soldiers including convicted World War II criminals. Jiang said he would back Japanese efforts to resolve a nuclear weapons crisis in DPRK through dialogue, but he warned that the PRC population as a whole was disturbed by the homage paid to the Yasukuni shrine. On what could be his last appearance on the world stage, Jiang rammed home the point three times during the meeting, forcing the two leaders to extend their scheduled 20-minute meeting by half an hour, said a Japanese official who was present. The war shrine had not been on the Japanese agenda, officials said.

"PRC Yasukuni Shrine Warning" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

5. Cross-Straits Relations

Taiwan's delegate to an annual summit of Pacific Rim economies said on Sunday he got the cold shoulder from PRC President Jiang Zemin when he informally invited him to visit the island. "I invited him to visit," Nobel Prize-winning chemist Lee Yuan-tseh, president of the Academia Sinica that is Taiwan's top academic institution, said after the close of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting of leaders. "He said that he couldn't because of the 'one China' principle'," he said. Lee spoke to Jiang Zemin in a rare brief encounter when they crossed paths during the meeting of leaders from the 21 APEC economies on Saturday and Sunday, and said he had passed on best wishes and the invitation on behalf of Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian.

"Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

6. Falun Gong Satellite Transmissions

A pirate broadcaster based in Taiwan tried to break into a PRC satellite signal last week to show Falun Gong material, a government spokesman and a state television employee said Wednesday. The PRC demanded that Taiwan track down the broadcaster and hand out "severe punishment." It was the second time in six weeks that PRC authorities have claimed that Falun Gong protesters using Taiwan as a base tried to break into signals on Sinosat.

"Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, US)

7. Cross-Straits Commercial Flights

Commercial flights between the PRC and Taiwan can begin without affecting talks on their political relationship, so long as the flights aren't described as "between country and country," the PRC's office that handles Taiwan issues said Wednesday. Taiwan's premier said Tuesday that the island is considering allowing charter flights to the PRC for the Lunar New Year holiday in February. They would be the first direct commercial flights since the two sides split 50 years ago. Limited direct shipping ties have resumed and the two sides are discussing resuming direct air and mail services - connections known as the "three links."

"Cross-Straits Relations" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 30, US)

Japan

1. Japanese Abduction Issue

Japan is likely to ask the DPRK for compensation this week for the abduction of Japanese citizens and the activities of DPRK spy ships, a major Japanese newspaper reported on Sunday. Japan has already said its will press the DPRK to abandon its nuclear program in normalization talks that resume on Tuesday in Kuala Lumpur, or face the possibility of not receiving economic aid. No further details were given, and officials were not immediately available for comment.

"Japanese Abduction Issue" (NAPSNet Daily Report, October 29, USA)

Nuclear Issues

1. Related News and Analysis

India has started construction work on two new nuclear power plants in Rajasthan. S.R. Dharwadkar, a former scientist at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) has claimed that he is developing a ceramic matrix to contain high-level nuclear waste from India's nuclear reactors.

"Related News and Analysis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

Afghanistan

1. Current News

The US has partially withdrawn reconstruction aid to Afghanistan in an effort to force regional warlords to end disputes. Afghan President Hamid Karzai has issued a warning to unruly factions within his own government to stop fighting. The Daily Times reports tensions between US Special Forces' bodyguards protecting President Hamid Karzai and Afghan soldiers.

"Current News" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

Campaign Against Al-Qaeda

1. News and Analysis

The daily News reports that the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents, along with officials of Pakistani security services, have arrested Dr. Amir Aziz, a respected orthopedic surgeon in Lahore, Pakistan, for allegedly providing bio-chemical weapons formula to Taliban and al-Qaeda. US special envoy to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad has stated that he "thinks" that "there are key [Taliban and Al Qaeda] figures near and across the border in Pakistan." The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has reportedly decided to wind up operations in Pakistan.

"News and Analysis" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

Pakistan & India

1. News

An Indian army spokesperson stated last week that it will take "eight to 10 days before the formal redeployment starts." The Indian government has, however, ruled out additional de-escalatory measures. Pakistan government has stated that "there is no physical evidence of any move back [by India]." Mariana Baabar (News, Pakistan) reports that India had decided to pull back its troops several months before the recent official announcement of troop withdrawal. According to the National Security Advisory Board (India), keeping troops in a state of high alert along the border with Pakistan cost India about \$13 million a day. Pakistan has also decided to withdraw its forces from its borders with India. Neither India nor Pakistan has, however, withdrawn its troops from the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir.

"News" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

2. Analysis & Opinions

Editorials in Pakistani and Indian newspapers welcomed military de-escalation along the international borders. The daily Hindu (India) believes that the "logical next step would be to revive full diplomatic relations and initiate other confidence building measures." The Daily Times (Pakistan) suggests that India has "no military option and no satisfactory pre-emptive doctrine at hand comparable to a peace dialogue with Pakistan over the Kashmir dispute." The Hindustan Times is pessimistic about "improvement in mutual ties in the near future." Indian Express suggests steps that India can take to "nudge" Pakistan "towards a normal relationship."

"Analysis & Opinions" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

3. October Elections

The daily News reports that the Pakistani government has finalized plans to transfer power to the newly elected political leadership by November 7th. It is not clear what type of coalition will form the government in Islamabad.

"October Elections" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

4. Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal

The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) - an electoral alliance of religious parties - has nominated Qazi Hussain Ahmed, the president of Jamaat-e-Islami, as the Parliamentary leader in the National Assembly. Maulana Fazlur Rehman will remain as the MMA nominee for the prime ministerial office. Malulana Rehman has stated that he sees no reason why "the religious forces and the Western world" cannot have good relations. Rahimullah Yusufzai (News) reports on the electoral performance of various component parties of the MMA. Farzan Bari (News) argues that "MMA's electoral success is not a victory of an ideology but a victory of pragmatism in the politics of our country." General Mirza Aslam Beg, former Chief of Army Staff, fears that, under US pressure, MMA will be denied power sharing in the future government.

"Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

5. Pakistan - US Relations

The Daily Times reports that Pakistan agreed in December 2001 to allow the US long-term use of Jacobabad airbase. Commander-in-Chief US Central Command, General Tommy R Franks, was in Pakistan to observe the 16-day joint US-Pakistani military exercises

"Pakistan - US Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

6. India: Domestic Situation

Five Dalits (untouchables), accused of slaughtering a cow, were lynched by a mob in the Indian state of Haryana. Dalit leaders have blamed the killings on increased activities of the Hindu fundamentalist Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal (BD) in the region. Acharya Giriraj Kishore, a senior leader of the VHP was quoted by the daily Indian Express as stating that "the life of a cow is more precious than that of a human being." Swami Agnivesh and Valson Thampu (Hindustan Times) see the lynching as "a symbolic pointer to the degeneration that is overtaking the country."

"India: Domestic Situation" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

7. China-India Relations

In a three-part essay, Brahma Chellaney (Hindustan Times) examines the history of India-China relations at the occasion of the 50 years anniversary of the war between the two countries.

"China-India Relations" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

8. Kashmir Elections- News

After weeks of negotiations with the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the Congress Party has agreed to form a coalition government with Mufti Mohammed Sayeed of PDP as the new Chief Minister of the state for the first three of the six-year term. Commenting on the long and sometime petty negotiations between the PDP and Congress, Amitabh Mattoo (Hindu) writes that "if the delay has resulted in a firmer commitment to a common minimum programme and in the determination to make a real difference, the loss of a fortnight may begin to be recognised, in retrospect, as a blessing in disguise." Firdous Syed (Hindu) argues that Kashmiri people are not interested in who will be the next Chief Minister of the state; rather, they are looking for a government that can provide "a vibrant, clean and responsive administration."

"Kashmir Elections - News" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

9. India, Pakistan, US

Richard Haass, a senior US State Department official, believes that "the time is not ripe for ambitious [US] diplomacy" for resolving the Kashmir dispute.

"India, Pakistan, US" (SANDNet Weekly Update, V.3 #35)

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